

200,000 phone workers on strike

BY SUSAN LaMONT

A strike by 200,000 telephone workers against four of the country's seven regional phone companies began August 6 when 160,000 employees in 15 states walked off the job. The strike widened a week later when 40,000 workers in five more states joined the walkout.

Most strikers are members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA); a smaller number are in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW).

The biggest issue in the strikes is the companies' demands that telephone operators, installers, technicians, and other workers pay substantially more for medical coverage now paid for by employers.

Involved in the strike are:

- 40,000 CWA members and 20,000 IBEW members at Nynex, the regional phone company for New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

- 41,000 CWA members and 11,000 IBEW members at Bell Atlantic, which covers Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

- In California and Nevada, 43,000 workers at Pacific Telesis.

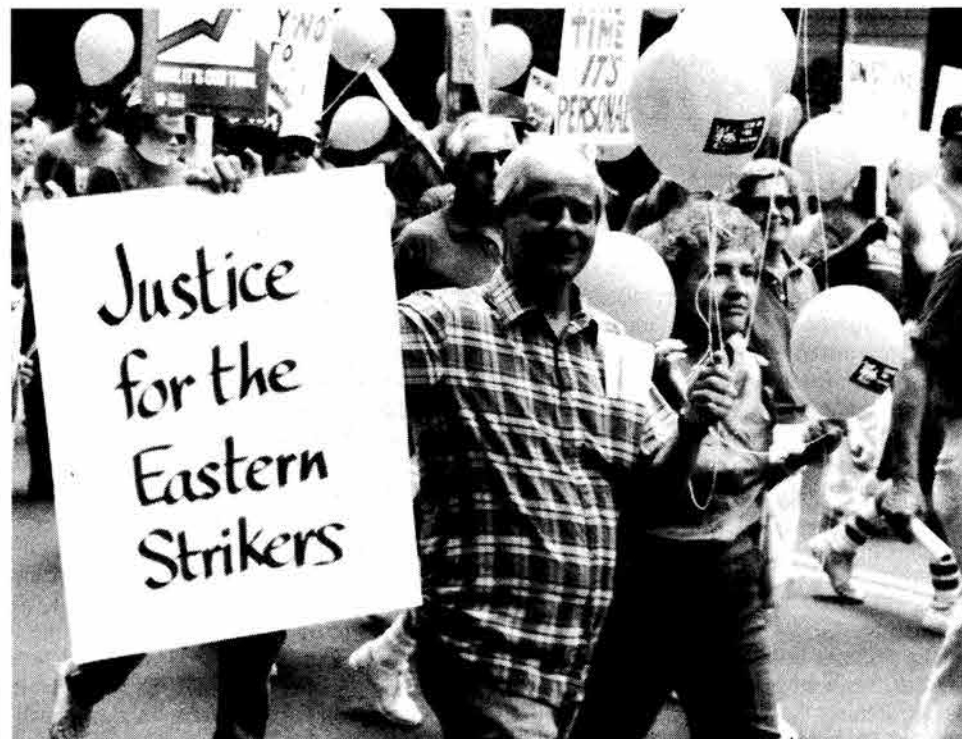
Workers at these three companies walked out August 6. On August 13, they were joined by:

- 40,000 unionists at Ameritech, which covers Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Last month the company reached an agreement with IBEW locals representing

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Thousands back miners, Eastern, phone strikers

6,000 march in Pittsburgh demonstration



Unionists and supporters from several states participated in August 13 march and rally in Pittsburgh to support striking Pittston miners, telephone workers, and Eastern Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots. See Eastern strike coverage pages 6, 14.

Militant/Michael Pennock

BY STEVE MARSHALL

PITTSBURGH — This city's downtown streets echoed with roars of "We... are... union!" as 6,000 unionists and supporters joined in a March and Rally for Labor Solidarity August 13. The demonstration voiced support for workers on strike against Eastern

Airlines, Pittston Coal, and Bell Atlantic telephone company.

Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), arriving in bus and car caravans from Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, made up the largest contingents. Seven busloads came from

Apartheid regime's disruption challenges Namibia's election process, freedom fight

BY RONI McCANN

"Systematic and serious violations by South Africa of both the letter and spirit of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia" are being carried out in the southwest African country, charged Hinyangerwa Asheeke, UN representative for the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), on August 10.

"South Africa's noncompliance with Resolution 435 violates virtually every provision of the UN plan," said Asheeke.

The SWAPO representative gave numerous examples of South Africa's disruption of the election process under way in Namibia.

South African paramilitary units

The Pretoria regime refuses to disarm its paramilitary units, used to terrorize the Namibian people. On August 15 South African-appointed Administrator Louis Pienaar ordered 1,200 members of the paramilitary units back to their bases. SWAPO demands that the units be completely dissolved as outlined in Resolution 435.

The South African government is also taking advantage of loopholes in the Voter Registration Act, which it drafted, to bus in thousands of white South Africans and others to register to vote in the Namibian elections.

On August 9 in London, SWAPO President Sam Nujoma said that notwithstanding the Namibian people's desire to see Resolution 435 implemented without interference, "the prospects for a genuinely free and fair tran-

sitional process to Namibia's independence hangs in the balance."

UN Security Council

Both SWAPO leaders called on the UN Security Council to take immediate steps to insure the end of South Africa's campaign of sabotage and disruption.

"The Security Council must carry out its full responsibility by implementing the resolution in its original and definitive form," stated Asheeke.

Resolution 435 was first adopted by the Security Council in 1978. In March 1988 the South African army was defeated by Angolan troops, SWAPO forces, and Cuban internationalist fighters in a strategic battle at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola. Soon afterward the Pretoria regime signed an agreement beginning the process of implementing Resolution 435.

Elections

The plan provides for the withdrawal of South African administrative and armed forces from Namibia. During the transition period the country is being administered by UN special representative Martti Ahtisaari; Pienaar, the South African-appointed administrator general; and the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), charged with monitoring the election process. UN-supervised elections to establish an independent Namibia are to take place on November 6.

South Africa has ruled Namibia for 73 years and has built up an extensive military

and administrative structure inside the country that includes thousands of Black Namibians. Some 1.1 million or 90 percent of Namibia's population is Black.

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S. Africa leader's tour part of anti-apartheid defiance campaign

BY GREG McCARTAN

A broad campaign of defiance against apartheid has been launched by anti-apartheid organizations inside South Africa. Backed by the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), as well as church and youth groups, the campaign is challenging restrictions on political activity and segregationist laws imposed by the regime in Pretoria.

Rapu Molekane, general secretary of the South African Youth Congress (Sayco), who is in the United States on a speaking tour, explained that during the first week of August, Blacks went to white segregated hospitals in Natal and Johannesburg and were treated.

"Detainees have attended press conferences and spoken at church services," he said. "There was also a funeral in the Western Cape for two who were blown up by limpet mines. The government said that it was not to be a political funeral, but thousands turned out

UMWA District 4 in Ohio.

Two groups of UMWA strikers, from Pittston in Virginia and Duquesne Light & Power here, led off the march. They were followed by Eastern strikers from the Pittsburgh area.

Behind them came hundreds of marchers wearing the red "Take a stand" T-shirts of the Communications Workers of America. Some 200,000 telephone workers have gone on strike in 20 states against four regional phone companies. Behind their contingent came hundreds of members of the United Steelworkers of America and United Electrical workers.

Teamsters, teachers, and fire fighters marched alongside rail, auto, postal and government workers, members of dozens of other unions, and activists from civil rights and women's organizations.

Eastern strikers

Eastern Airlines workers staffed a table and signed up people for a possible action at the Pittsburgh airport. Since March 17,000 Machinists union members, flight attendants, and pilots have waged a fight against Eastern Airlines.

The rally's main speakers were UMWA President Richard Trumka, United Steelworkers President Lynn Williams, and International Association of Machinists official Charles Bryan. They called for unity behind the coal, airline, and telephone strikes.

Edna Jones, speaking for the Daughters of Mother Jones women's auxiliary in Virginia, announced receipt of a \$400 donation from the British group Women Against Pit Closures. Greetings from South African and Salvadoran union federations were read and applauded.

Most of the coal miners present were identified by the camouflage they wore, which has become a symbol of the Virginia miners in their 18-week strike against Pittston Coal.

In June 44,000 UMWA members walked off their jobs on a sympathy strike across the country backing the Pittston miners in their fight.

"It's the only way we can make a statement," said a miner from Ohio. In his opinion

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anyway, and organizations spoke in their own names. The flags of Sayco, the African National Congress, and the South African Communist Party were hoisted. All of this activity is considered illegal by the government."

Detainees are activists in South Africa who were arrested during the past two years and held in prison with no charges filed against them. After release from prison, many were restricted from participating in political meetings, speaking in the name of their own organizations, or traveling outside of certain areas.

Tour is part of defiance campaign

Molekane, himself a former detainee, is in the United States as part of the defiance effort. He represents the 1.5-million member Sayco on the UDF's executive committee. The youth body is comprised of students, young workers, and unemployed youth. Molekane was released from 16 months detention following a series of hunger strikes in the prisons

Continued on Page 13

Challenges to Namibia fighters

Continued from front page

Beginning in the 1970s Pretoria began to build up the 24,000-member South West African Territorial Force. Taking advantage of the economic conditions in the country, South Africa offered Namibian volunteers a slightly better standard of living. SWATF became the largest employer of Namibians. Part of the SWATF strategy has been to offer education and other services to volunteers, aimed at reducing dissatisfaction among the Black population.

South Africa also maintains its counterinsurgency unit, Koevoet. Koevoet means crowbar in Afrikaans, the language that evolved from Dutch spoken by early settlers in South Africa.

Hidipo Hamutenya, SWAPO director of mobilization and information, says that Koevoet units in armored vehicles routinely raid villages in northern Namibia searching for SWAPO "terrorists" and beating up villagers, warning them not to vote against the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance. The DTA has ruled Namibia under Pretoria's guidance for the last four years.

Koevoet units, combined with other forces, bring the number of armed personnel to one for every 14 Namibians.

South African troops were supposed to be reduced according to the UN plan. However, instead of disarming the Koevoet paramilitary unit and dismantling its command structure, it has been incorporated into the police force, and brutalization of the Namibian people continues.

Today SWAPO estimates the Koevoet forces make up 70 percent of the police force in northern Namibia. SWAPO officials call

on UN special representative Ahtisaari to adopt a more forceful position against police intimidation.

The UN reduced from 7,500 to under 5,000 the forces it sent to Namibia. Moreover, most are unarmed and can do nothing to prevent the intimidation and violence carried out by the South African forces.

When asked about a recent shooting in early August by Koevoet elements, one UNTAG unit commander responded, "I monitor. I don't make conclusions. We can report them, but we can't stop them."

Along with this violence and intimidation, the Pretoria regime is trying to block SWAPO from winning the two-thirds majority it needs to establish a government. Pretoria is bringing in white South Africans, mercenaries recruited outside the country, and Angolans who are members of UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), to register to vote for parties in opposition to SWAPO.

According to the law written by the South African government, South Africans who have lived in Namibia as civil servants, soldiers, and police personnel, and their children, are all free to cross the Namibian border and vote.

"Consequently," says SWAPO President Nujoma, "right-wing elements in South Africa are now busily mobilizing buses, car pools, and train tickets to transport an estimated 150,000 South Africans to Namibia."

The members of the Organization of African Unity at their meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, July 24-26, noted these violations of UN Resolution 435 and issued a declaration urging the UN secretary general to take steps to insure free and fair elections.

The Commission on Independence for Namibia, a private U.S. group sponsored by the Washington-based Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, recently returned from a week-long visit to Namibia and cited "major obstacles" to fair elections.



Militant/Fred Murphy
SWAPO leader Hinyangerwa Asheeke

Int'l effort to win readers set for fall

BY SUSAN LaMONT

On September 9 *Militant* supporters around the world will kick off a nine-week campaign to win 9,000 new readers for the *Militant*, the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*, the French-language quarterly *Lutte ouvrière*, and the Marxist magazines *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*. The drive will conclude November 12, the day thousands will be march-

ing in Washington, D.C., to defend abortion rights.

Supporters plan to sell 5,800 introductory or renewal subscriptions to the *Militant*, 1,400 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 400 to *Lutte ouvrière* during the sales campaign. The goal also includes 1,400 single copies of *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*.

Supporters will be organizing sales of the socialist press in working-class communities, at plant gates, on picket lines, at demonstrations and other political events, on busy downtown streets, and on campuses.

An important part of the international circulation drive will be getting a copy of the *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* into the hands of every new subscriber. The *Action Program* was first issued by socialists in mid-1988 in response to the October 1987 stock market crash, which signaled a world economic and social crisis in the 1990s.

Since then, tens of thousands of copies have been sold to workers, farmers, political activists, and others in many countries. The program has been translated into Spanish and French; Swedish and Icelandic editions will be available soon.

The circulation drive will build on the successful eight-week spring sales campaign, during which 9,290 new readers internationally were won for the socialist press — 116 percent of the original goal of 8,000. Of these, nearly 20 percent live in countries outside the United States.

In the coming drive, *Militant* supporters in Australia, Sweden, Iceland, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, the United States, France, and Puerto Rico will be taking on goals.

Part of the campaign will be an international effort to sell the socialist press to airline

and airport workers in cities around the world. Supporters in Sweden, Canada, and the United States who have organized airport sales teams have gotten an enthusiastic response from workers who want to learn more about the Eastern Airlines strike and other developments covered in the *Militant*.

Lutte ouvrière, which began appearing in a new monthly magazine format in November 1988, will be published quarterly, announced editor Michel Prairie recently. The socialist magazine is published in Montréal and circulated among French-speaking workers and activists in Canada, France, Haiti, the United States, Senegal, Burkina Faso, and other countries. This move will allow supporters of *Lutte ouvrière* to place more emphasis on regular sales of the *Militant*, which, as a weekly paper, offers more rounded coverage than is possible in a magazine published less frequently. At the same time, Prairie said, making *Lutte ouvrière* a quarterly will mean an improved magazine, with each issue of lasting value.

"An important part of the circulation drive will be selling *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale* to the same fighters who buy the *Militant*, *PM*, and *Lutte ouvrière*," Prairie stressed. Supporters have already begun to have experiences that show this is possible. "Workers and young people who want to learn more about Cuba, or the deepening struggle in southern Africa, or the continuity of the communist movement will be able to get into these, and other, subjects in a deeper way by reading *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*." He explained that the six issues of *New International* that have appeared so far are being reissued with newly designed covers to make them more attractive to new readers.

New 'Militant' staff writer McCartan will join reporting team to Africa



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky
Greg McCartan, former national chairperson of Young Socialist Alliance.

The *Militant* is adding Greg McCartan to its staff beginning with the current issue. Before joining the paper McCartan was the national chairperson of the Young Socialist Alliance.

As a leader of the YSA, McCartan helped to coordinate several tours of anti-apartheid youth leaders from South Africa. He will join James Harris from New York and Alan Harris from London in representing the Pathfinder publishing house at the Fifth Annual Zimbabwe Bookfair August 28-September 2, in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The *Militant* is making plans to send James Harris and McCartan on to the southern African countries of Angola and Zambia during September to report for the *Militant* on developments in the region.

With the developments in the region over the past year in the struggle against the apartheid regime, firsthand coverage in the *Militant* will be a valuable tool for getting out the truth to anti-apartheid fighters around the world.

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Cuban events mark advance for socialism

Defense of Cuban revolution central theme at int'l socialist conference

BY PETER THIERJUNG

OBERLIN, Ohio — The events in Cuba over the last two months pose a real challenge to class-struggle fighters around the world, Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters said.

Waters referred to events that included the arrest of several government officials on charges of corruption and the trial and execution of four officers of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of Interior, including Gen. Arnaldo Ochoa, for drug trafficking.

"The 'Ochoa affair,' for lack of a better term, is not the end of a chapter, not the closing of a book on some shameful episode of the past," Waters said. "It registers what has already taken place, what has been accomplished over the last three years as Cuban working people more and more bring their weight to bear in determining the direction and advance of the revolution," she explained. "It is the beginning of a qualitative step forward, a deepening of the revolutionary mass movement that is the heart and soul of the rectification process." She said the recent events marked the "sharpening of the social conflict in Cuba."

Waters was speaking at the International Active Workers and Socialist Educational Conference here, which attracted more than 1,000 communists and activists from nearly 20 different countries.

The gathering was held August 5-9. Throughout the conference's major reports, classes, and workshops the advances in building socialism in Cuba and Cuba's battle to defend a worldwide communist perspective were central themes. A rally to celebrate 30 years of the Cuban revolution was organized during the conference.

The featured talk given by Waters was titled "Socialism or Death: Cuba's Communist Leadership Today."

Waters explained that communists worldwide have a stake in the outcome of the conflict as it is now unfolding in Cuba. They have to see it within the context of today's world capitalist crisis, which gives rise to imperialist war, civil war, national uprisings, and exploding class struggles.

She underscored Cuban President Fidel Castro's warning of the increased threat of war by the U.S. imperialists, who have been emboldened by what they see as a crisis of socialism. Waters pointed to Operation Global Shield '89, a massive rehearsal for a strike attack and invasion of Cuba, as evidence that Castro's warnings were not rhetoric.

"The leadership challenges in Cuba today are our challenges as well. The rectification battle is our battle. We place ourselves within that battle," Waters emphasized, and from there communists face the challenge of how to advance the social, economic, and political power of working people the world over.

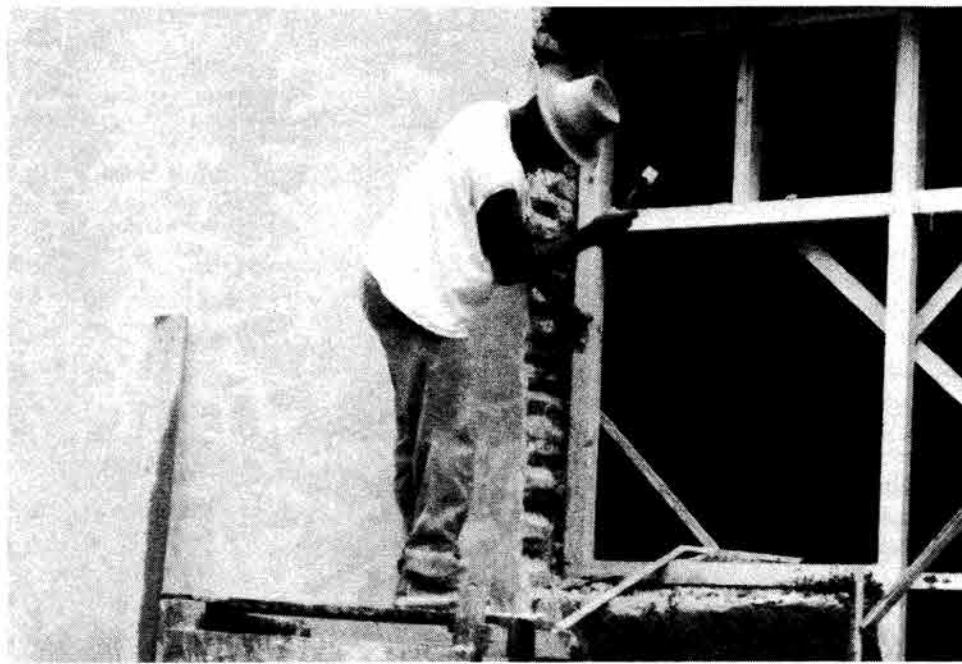
The rectification process is a fundamental political reorientation in Cuba. It was initiated by the Cuban Communist Party leadership in 1986 in response to evidence of growing political demobilization and demoralization among Cuba's working people. These trends were registered by increasing instances of bureaucratic mismanagement, indifference, abuse, declining labor productivity and work morale, and the growth of corruption and fraud.

Castro's Council of State speech

Waters urged everyone to read Castro's July 9 speech to the Cuban Council of State, which presented the facts that had led to the conviction of Ochoa and the Ministry of the Interior officials. (The full text of the speech is reprinted in the August 11 issue of the *Militant*.)

Castro's speech catalogued Ochoa and the others' worst crimes, which included using their official positions to carry out business operations for personal gain; theft of funds from Nicaragua, Angola, and Cuba; and ultimately dealings with the infamous Medellín drug cartel, operations that threatened the security and integrity of the Cuban revolution.

The revelations that surfaced, and subsequent events, Waters said, have led to a reorganization of the entire general staff of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, as ranking FAR generals have been assigned to



One of the thousands of Cuban internationalist volunteers who has returned from Angola. He is working on a voluntary work brigade repairing housing in Camagüey.

the Ministry of the Interior and its various departments to rebuild it.

As this shakeup is happening, Waters explained, thousands of battle-tested Cuban internationalist soldiers are returning from Angola ready to take up the tasks at hand in Cuba.

Waters noted how these developments coincided with significant leadership changes that occurred earlier this year in the sugar workers' union and the leadership of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions.

These developments, Waters explained, "reflect and register the deepening debate, the discussion taking place inside Cuba" over the course of advancing Cuba's socialist revolution.

Lessons of Angola, Ochoa affair

Waters focused on some of the rich lessons about Cuba's heroic role in Angola and about communist leadership that can be drawn from the Ochoa affair.

The conduct of the Cuban leadership in

the past two months is a lesson in "real politics," Waters said. Leading the class struggle, organizing a working-class vanguard to advance political consciousness, showing the world what socialism really is, and why its worth fighting for, "it is these examples of what is taking place in Cuba that we have an obligation to learn from," Waters explained.

Waters underscored the deeper appreciation one develops for Cuba's internationalist role in Angola and the role Cuba's returning internationalist volunteers have in the rectification process as one studies the information revealed in the Ochoa affair.

In addition to the material price Cuba had to pay in the Angola mission, Waters pointed to the strain caused by the substantial allocation of leadership resources, including the rotation of 8,000 to 9,000 officers in Angola every two or three years.

"Despite war weariness, despite the stretch," Waters said, "we can now better understand the strength of the leadership of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba,

and the meaning of the political commitment to the struggle in Angola." The Cubans subordinated everything to achieve victory in Angola, she noted.

Waters also pointed to the lessons gained in the Ochoa affair about collective leadership functioning, proletarian ethics and morality, and party building — lessons that enrich the work of communists everywhere.

The Ochoa affair "is not a question of good people versus bad people. It is a question of social pressures, of economic pressures, of much broader social forces," Waters explained.

"The stakes," Waters said, "are the same as the ones that Che Guevara raised and fought for over 25 years ago." The effort by working people to build a socialist society will not happen through capitalist methods based on profitability and individual material interests, but through the conscious collective effort by politically motivated men and women, she explained.

Fight to reinforce communist relations

The rectification process is the fight to organize economic relations and forces in Cuba to reinforce communist relations. Without it privilege, corruption, and liberalism will assert themselves and "all the calls for moral principles, virtues, and revolutionary will not be able to alter what has happened," Waters said.

Waters quoted Castro's final remarks in his Council of State speech, saying they summarized the stakes in Cuba today. "We cannot rest until there is one single world here," Castro said, "not the world of the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, but the world of our workers, our working class, our proletariat, our farmers."

"Class forces in Cuba are moving forward," Waters concluded. "We here approach this from within the working class, to explain this, and to make it our battle. Once more the Cuban revolution has proved itself stronger" than all the imperialist attempts to roll back history.

Conference rally celebrates revolution

"Angola and Cuba are blood brothers in struggle," Paca-Kabedi, an attaché of the

Continued on Page 10

Cuban government ministers charged with corruption are replaced

BY SELVA NEBBIA

On August 2 Levi Farah Balmaseda was removed from his post as minister of Cuba's construction materials industry. Farah was replaced by José Cañete Alvarez, the technical vice-minister of construction.

The Ministry of the Construction Materials Industry was set up to facilitate the distribution of materials necessary for the many construction projects initiated as part of the process of rectification. This effort, initiated in 1986, has been mobilizing thousands of Cubans in voluntary work brigades to build housing, day-care centers, family-doctor clinics, and other much-needed social projects.

Cañete led the Sixth Congress Contingent, which recently completed work on expanding the Miguel Enríquez Hospital in Havana. The hospital construction project was taken up as part of the rectification process and was completed in record time.

The Sixth Congress Contingent was one of the special contingents of skilled construction workers that are taking on major projects. They have been set up alongside the minibrigades, which are volunteer brigades composed primarily of men and women who are not professional construction workers. The contingent Cañete headed took its name from the Sixth Congress of the National Union of Construction Workers, held in July 1988.

According to *Granma*, the newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, the appointment of Cañete as minister of the construction materials industry is "to attain more efficiency in the directing of this ministry."

After a judicial hearing that took place July 20 and 21, Havana's Provincial People's Tri-

bunal sentenced Diocles Torralbas González to 20 years' imprisonment. Torralbas was the minister of transportation and vice-president of the Council of Ministers.

Arrested on June 13, Torralbas was charged with embezzling, abuse of authority, unlawful use of financial and material resources, illicit occupation and administering of buildings, and falsifying public documents. He was also accused of having a corrupt, wasteful, and dissolute personal conduct.

During the course of Torralbas' trial it was revealed that he had bought 200 cars, which he arbitrarily distributed. According to a report in the July 24 *Granma*, the cars were illegally purchased with more than \$840,000 in funds from two enterprises of the Ministry of Transportation that operated outside the country.

As a result of the trial and investigation of Torralbas, charges were brought against five other officials of the Ministry of Transportation.

These events come in the context of sweeping changes made in the Ministry of the Interior (MININT) since the convictions in July of Gen. Arnaldo Ochoa and other high-ranking officials of the armed forces and the MININT on charges of drug trafficking and high treason. Ochoa and three others were executed on July 13.

On July 31 José Abrantes Fernández, former head of the MININT, was arrested. Abrantes had been replaced on June 29 by Gen. Abelardo Colomé Ibarra from the Revolutionary Armed Forces. For several years Abrantes had been in charge of the personal security of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

The former head of the MININT was

charged with negligence in the fulfillment of duty, corruption or tolerance of corrupt behavior, improper use of resources, illegal possession of state funds for nonessential MININT spending, and creation of unauthorized enterprises for commercial activities in the foreign trade sphere.

Other MININT officials arrested were: Gen. Roberto González Caso, former chief of immigration and foreign affairs; Oscar Carreño Gómez, former chief of customs; Lt. Col. Rolando Castañeda Izquierdo; and Héctor Carbonell Méndez. Carbonell is a former director of an enterprise that carried out operations in foreign currency and was closely linked to the MININT.

On August 6 Col. Rafael Alvarez Cueto, chief of the Department of Finances of the MININT, committed suicide. The August 7 issue of *El Diario-La Prensa*, a New York daily, reported that Alvarez had left letters explaining that he had reached that decision due to his "embarrassment over the situation facing the institution to which he had dedicated most of his life."

As part of the major leadership changes taking place in Cuba, Emilio Aragonés was removed from his position as head of the International Finance Bank and of Cimex. Aragonés was a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban CP since 1965.

The International Finance Bank and Cimex were set up to facilitate bank and commercial transactions between Cuba and foreign enterprises. Cimex had close ties with the MININT.

Jesús Cándido González Torre and Angel Marcos Britos, both vice-presidents of the state committees of Prices and Finances;

Continued on Page 10

Nicaragua bookfair nets many new Curtis supporters

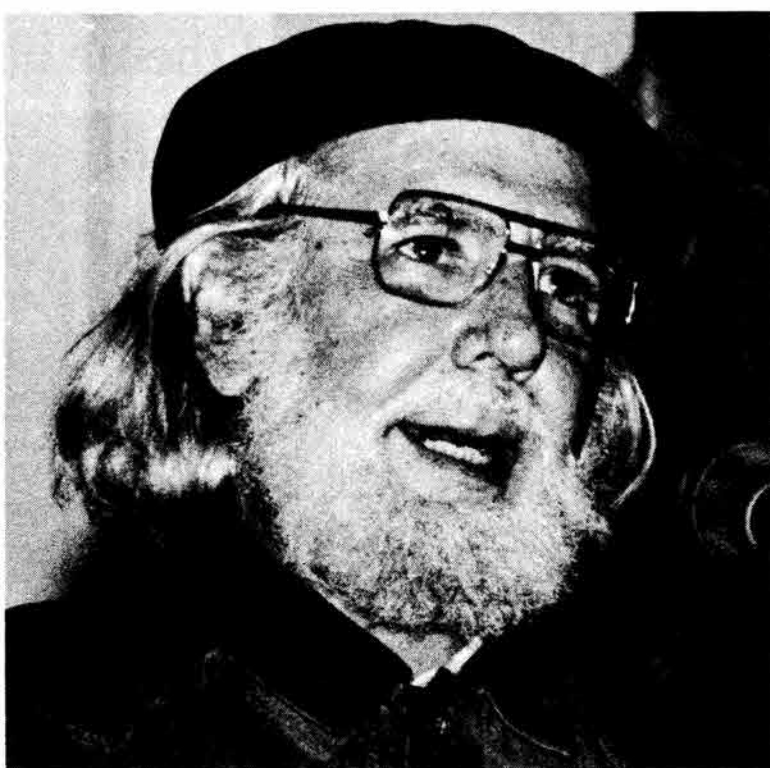
Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year jail term on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for Curtis. To contact the committee, write Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695.

Eighty-eight new endorsements were given at the July 20-26 International Bookfair in Managua, Nicaragua, for the defense of Mark

ers and activists in solidarity campaigns for Nicaragua, including from Belgium, Dominican Republic, Canada, Sweden, Britain, and several parts of the United States, including Iowa where Curtis is from.

Others were activists in unions ranging from the Workers Commission of Spain to the teachers union in Queensland, Australia.

Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee set up a literature table at the 1989 national conference of the National Organization for



Ernesto Cardenal, president of the National Council of Culture in Nicaragua, endorsed the Curtis defense effort.

Militant/Robert Kopec

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

Curtis.

The majority of those signing lived in Nicaragua, a few of these being on solidarity projects from other countries. Among the endorsers was bookfair organizer Ernesto Cardenal, president of the National Council of Culture, and Nicaraguan poet Carlos Rygi.

A young Nicaraguan woman studied the leaflet about Curtis carefully and then asked to take some more leaflets. She came back with endorsements from five of her friends, some of them members of the JS-19, the Sandinista youth organization. Also signing were Commandantes Humberto Campbell, the head of government for the South Atlantic Coast region, and Monica Baltodano, a leader of the Nicaraguan women's organization, AMNLAE.

Support for Curtis extended to visitors from 13 other countries. Two Basques came over to the table after members of their work brigade had passed around leaflets. They told how hundreds of Basque nationalists were political prisoners in Spanish jails, some on frame-up rape charges. Other fighters for national rights who signed up came from Ireland, El Salvador, and Palestine.

Many of those signing were lead-

Women in Cincinnati. The message of justice for Mark Curtis was well received throughout the July 21-23 conference.

Seventy NOW members signed a petition protesting the denial of non-English literature and correspondence to Mark Curtis and other prisoners at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa. Some signers suggested other organizations to approach for support.

One woman originally from Mexico asked if Iowa is an "English only" state where other languages are excluded in official use. She expressed the necessity to fight such developments.

Scores of women received literature and discussed the frame-up of Curtis. Some NOW activists were not surprised at the use of a rape charge to frame a political activist.

One woman, herself a victim of sexual assault, noted that the police and the courts do not respond quickly or sympathetically to rape victims. For that reason she was immediately suspicious of the vigorous prosecution of a political activist on charges of raping a young Black woman.

Curtis supporters distributed defense committee literature at a march and rally for abortion rights held during the conference. After-

ward, a number of participants came to the Curtis literature table for discussions and more information.

Publisher John Zippert of the Greene County, Alabama, weekly *The Democrat*, signed up as a supporter of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

"From the information I have seen, Mark Curtis was probably framed by the FBI in collaboration with the Des Moines police for union activities and opposition to U.S. imperialist policies in Central America," Zippert wrote in a letter to the defense committee.

"His ability to make multicultural and multiracial links necessary to advance the struggle singled him out for police attack," he continued.

"Let me add my small voice, as publisher of a weekly newspaper in a black majority county in rural Al-

abama, to the growing call for the release of Mark Curtis for unjust imprisonment."

His letter concludes, "I will try to do what I can to publicize and support the work of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee."

John "Skinny" Weiss, a leader of the 1985-86 meat-packers struggle in Austin, Minnesota, wrote to the warden at the prison where Curtis is incarcerated.

"Prisoners should not be cut off from the rest of the world. As a retired packinghouse worker, I realize the importance of workers being able to communicate with each other. The work force is changing — more Asians, Mexicans, and others entering it every day. If we are to communicate, we must learn each other's languages.

"Using various languages will al-

ways be important for Mark in his work, and in his union and political activities.

"I call on you to let all prisoners receive non-English materials of their choice and to end restrictions on prisoners' rights to share literature with each other."

Meat-packers from the Konsum-Chark factory in Sweden sent the following protest message:

"We demand that you reverse the undemocratic ban on Spanish and other foreign-language literature sent to Mark Curtis. We specifically protest your return of our union newspaper, *Mål och Medel*. It must be a democratic right [for Curtis] to read what the Swedish food workers union — Svenska Livsmedelsarbetarförbundet — wrote about Mark Curtis."

Reflecting the composition of the work force at Konsum-Chark, the letter was signed in Swedish, Spanish, Creole, Tagalog, Kurdish, "Swinglish," Thai, and Tamil.

Weiss' letter and the message from the Swedish meat-packers are two of thousands sent to Iowa prison authorities to protest their ban of non-English materials and correspondence and right of prisoners to share literature.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is on an international campaign to win these rights for Curtis and other prisoners.

Protests should be addressed to: John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205.

Copies should be sent to: Attorney General Thomas J. Miller, Hoover State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319; Paul Grossheim, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 E. 12th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309; and the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Ellen Whitt from Des Moines, Iowa, and Maria Hamberg from Stockholm, Sweden, contributed to this column.

Report shows massive FBI spying on antiwar group

BY ELLEN WHITT

A report by the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has revealed more about the scope of spying by the FBI against the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

Made public July 14, the report includes an admission by FBI inspectors that 39 investigations related to the one directed against CISPES continued after June 1985 — the date when bureau officials say they closed it.

CISPES is a nationwide organization that plays a prominent role in activities calling for an end to U.S. intervention in El Salvador and provides material aid to the victims of the war there. The FBI surveillance extended to groups and individuals that had any contact with CISPES — from unions to members of Congress.

The FBI inspectors told the Senate committee that the agency's files identify "a total of 24,285 unique names, consisting of 13,198 persons and 11,087 organizations."

The main CISPES surveillance operation targeted 200 groups. The FBI admitted conducting 178 spin-off investigations of individuals or groups. The last spin-off investigation is said to have been closed in March 1988.

The inspectors said that all 59 FBI field offices were involved, and more than 20,000 employee hours were spent on the investigation. CISPES and spin-off operations produced at least 650 volumes of FBI files comprised of thousands of pages.

File opened in 1981

According to the Senate committee report, the FBI opened its first file in January 1981, "because of a report to the Washington field office from the U.S. Park Police that CISPES was planning a demonstration in Washington, D.C., to protest Salvadoran government violence, the slaying of four religious missionar-

ies in El Salvador and U.S. government aid to El Salvador."

Upon receiving this report, the FBI informed the White House Situation Room, the Secret Service, the Justice Department's Emergency Programs Center, and the State Department of the planned demonstration.

In June 1981 Frank Varella was hired by the FBI to infiltrate and spy on the Dallas CISPES chapter. During 1981 the government sought to establish a basis for prosecuting CISPES on charges of violating the Foreign Agents Registration Act. No evidence was found to support a charge.

'Terrorism' investigation

In March 1983 the FBI opened "an international terrorism investigation" of CISPES. Although all CISPES files reported on constitutionally protected legal activity, the FBI continued this investigation through June 1985.

The field office in Norfolk, Virginia, was among the first to be authorized to investigate local chapters of CISPES. Headquarters gave the go-ahead after CISPES activists in Norfolk sponsored an event featuring Alejandro Molina Lara, a Salvadoran labor leader, at Old Dominion University.

In June 1983 the plans of the Dallas CISPES chapter to participate in a counter-demonstration against a scheduled Ku Klux Klan march was reported to senior FBI officials.

An attached note initialed by then FBI Director William Webster stated "that CISPES was the subject of an FBI investigation and that the Dallas office was instructed to provide appropriate coverage to this demonstration based on the possibility of violence."

Other examples of FBI activities concerning CISPES include:

- FBI agents pretending to be home buyers to tour the home of a subject of the investigation;
- opening an investigation of a college professor "on the basis of an exam question and a speaker invited to the class";
- subjecting the CISPES affiliate in Birmingham, Alabama, to a special three-month "security/terrorism" investigation with no apparent cause;
- obtaining long-distance telephone records of CISPES offices and investigating recipients of calls;
- directing infiltration of a national conference of CISPES in Chicago;
- gathering bank records of local chapters;
- accepting materials regarding school records in violation of the Buckley Amendment barring such disclosures;
- approving closed-circuit TV videotaping of the entrance of an office;
- obtaining biographical data on leaders of CISPES;
- spin-off investigations of the Pledge of Resistance and other national groups;
- sorting through trash disposed of by CISPES activists; and
- checking of licenses, employment, credit bureau, and criminal records of individuals.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence termed the investigation "a serious failure in FBI management" and an "aberration." "There was a legitimate basis for the FBI to investigate material support for the use of violence by guerrillas seeking to overthrow the Salvadoran Government," the committee asserted. It criticized the FBI for tending "to emphasize those groups that attack U.S. interests" in selecting targets, but held that the investigation did not reflect "significant political or ideological bias in the conduct of

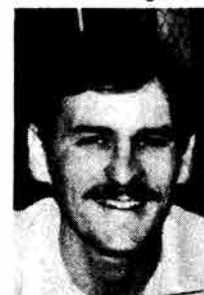
international terrorism investigations."

The report called for "the removal from FBI custody — by expunging or by transfer to the Archives — of the FBI headquarters and field office files [on CISPES and spin-off subjects] which lacked information establishing a valid" cause for investigation.

The CISPES national office in Washington, D.C., issued a statement challenging the finding that the FBI's actions were an "aberration." The Senate committee report, the statement read, "raises new and worrying questions about the true purpose of the investigation and whether similar investigations continue today under different names."

from PATHFINDER The Frame-up of Mark Curtis by Margaret Jayko

This pamphlet tells the story of Mark Curtis, a unionist and fighter for immigrant rights, who is serving a 25-year sentence in an Iowa prison on trumped-up rape charges. 71 pp., \$2.50.



Order from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. (Please include \$.75 for postage and handling.)

Nicaraguan peasants given land from state farm

BY SETH GALINSKY

SAN RAMÓN, Nicaragua — "Every day peasants come to our office asking for land," Denis Medina, an official of the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Reform (MINDRA), said. "Many times they ask for parcels that belong to the state farms, but we are not always for giving it to them."

But the case of the 2,600-acre San Juan ranch, one of 17 properties in the state-owned Denis Gutiérrez corporation, is different, Medina stated. Since San Juan is a cattle ranch and the rest of the properties are dedicated to coffee, "it's not really important for the corporation," he said, "and it is underutilized."

The Association of Rural Workers (ATC), which organizes farm workers at the corporation, including 20 at San Juan, opposed giving the whole ranch, Medina added. "But we reached an agreement and the ATC has agreed to giving half."

There is no danger of a conflict between the agricultural workers and peasants, according to Medina. "First of all, because we explain to the workers that they are the allies of the peasants. We've been very careful not to provoke a confrontation." And secondly, he said, "We do not go directly as the state to tell the workers to turn the land over. Instead, the leaders of the workers themselves explain the decision and accept responsibility for it."

Noting that there are several other areas in the Matagalpa region where landless peasants have looked toward the state farms as the place to meet their demands for land, Medina concluded, "We hope that with adequate attention we will be able to continue avoiding conflicts in the future."

2,000 families still landless

Since the revolutionary government came to power in 1979, 29,000 peasant families have received land in the Matagalpa and Jinotega provinces of central and northern Nicaragua. But, according to leaders of the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG), there are still more than 2,000 families in need of land in this part of the country.

While additional land is still being distributed, it has not been enough to solve the problem. Jaime Peterson, UNAG president in San Ramón, cited a group of peasants who recently were granted title to land in his district. When they arrived to begin farming, they found that another group of peasants had just occupied part of the land. "I've gone out there, but I have not yet been able to convince

Seattle: farm workers march for rights

BY MATT HERRESHOFF

SEATTLE — Striking nurses, grocery workers, and other Seattle-area unionists joined nearly 100 farm workers from eastern Washington last month on a March for Farm Worker Rights.

"Unions are coming together because we do have common foes — the corporations," Roger Yockey, a spokesperson for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1105, told the rally of 300. More than 8,000 UFCW members are on strike against major Seattle-area grocery chains.

A contingent of nurses, members of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199NW, also joined the rally and march. Some 1,300 nurses are on strike against Group Health, a Seattle-based health maintenance organization.

"It was a rally of the struggling unions supporting the farm workers," said Tomás Villanueva, president of the United Farm Workers of Washington State. "We could see we're not alone."

Just one week before the march and rally, the UFWWS led two successful strikes in the cherry harvest in Wenatchee. In just two days, the growers were forced to rescind pay cuts and give raises to 200 workers in two orchards. These were the first farm-worker strikes this year, and the union's first actions ever in the Wenatchee area.

The action helped publicize the UFWWS's boycott against Chateau Ste. Michelle, the state's biggest winery.

the other group to leave," Peterson stated.

Francisco González, a leader of the 41 families that have been promised half of San Juan, said in an interview at the ranch that there are three nearby farmers with more than 1,000 acres apiece, some of it idle. But the peasants are not asking for that land, González said, "because it is government policy now to not touch the private producers" — that is capitalist farmers.

González, like the rest of the group has lived most of his life in a small town near San Juan. He rents land from other farmers and also works part of the year for a wage, picking coffee.

Ranch supervisor Lucas Loagsi said that giving half the property to the peasants would require the reduction of the livestock herd. González disagreed. "The state just doesn't manage this ranch properly," he said.

It's not a question of idle or underutilized land, Vidal Picado, ATC president for Denis Gutiérrez, said. "This is social property that the revolution nationalized." For the peasants he stated, "this is a nearby piece of land, but for the workers it is our reserve for future development." ATC leader José Adán Rivera says the state farms "are the seeds of socialism."

The state farms have been able to significantly improve the living standards of farm workers, Picado stated. He pointed to new living quarters built on the state farms, includ-



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Peasant, one from a group of 41 families, was given land on a state farm run by agricultural workers. Nicaragua's agrarian reform ministry did not want to seize private lands held by capitalist farmers to settle these landless peasants.

ing three houses at San Juan. Some of the Denis Gutiérrez units have child-care centers and teachers on the farms paid by the corporation.

"We believe that the peasants' demand for land is just and we support them," Picado said, "but their demand cannot be met at the expense of the workers."

According to Picado, there are other alternatives to meet the needs of landless peasants. There are numerous large landowners, "many who live outside the country and leave someone else in charge," he stated. "And a lot of their land is idle." It is their lands that should be given to the peasants, Picado argued, not the state farms.

UNAG's organization secretary for the region, Oto Francisco Zeledón, outlined a different position. "When there is demand for land, we think the first place we should look is at the already existing state farms and co-operatives. If there is idle land there it should be given to the peasants," he stated. Only when all other alternatives are exhausted should individual landowners be expropriated, he said.

The ATC has reluctantly accepted the government action turning over part of the San Juan ranch, "but it must be made clear that this is the last time and from now on the people's property will not be touched," said Picado.

A visit to a Philippine prison camp

BY RUSSELL JOHNSON

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Camp Crame, on one of Metro Manila's busiest thoroughfares, was the focus of the military mutiny and mass mobilizations that finally brought down the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines in February 1986.

But Crame quickly reverted to its repressive role against the Philippine freedom struggle. It is the headquarters of the Philippine Constabulary, the indigenous military force constructed by the U.S. conquerors at the turn of the century to quell the anticolonial struggle without further loss of U.S. lives. Now the Constabulary is central to President Corazon Aquino government's "counterinsurgency" drives against rebellious peasants and workers.

Camp Crame houses a military prison. Its 160 inmates are mostly soldiers convicted of common crimes or of participation in a series of right-wing coup attempts against the Aquino government during 1986 and 1987.

One block is known as the "VIP stockade" because it accommodates 17 rightist officers who plotted against Aquino. These prisoners are looked on very kindly by their captors and have considerable freedom of movement. Several of them are reported to have been secretly brought back into active service against the guerrillas of the New People's Army (NPA).

Another detention block, however, is more closely guarded. It houses 11 left-wing political detainees who have been arrested since 1986. The government alleges they are central leaders of the outlawed Communist Party of the Philippines and the NPA, including the alleged CPP chairman, Rodolfo Salas, and secretary general, Rafael Baylosis.

Last April this reporter and Kate Kaku spent a day in the Camp Crame stockade, visiting with the 11 detainees to discuss their situation and that of Kaku's husband, Mark Curtis, the framed-up packinghouse worker and political activist doing a 25-year stretch in a U.S. prison.

We were escorted to the stockade by Betty de Vera, the wife of Crame detainee Benjamin de Vera. De Vera was herself a political prisoner from 1982 to 1986.

Inside the military camp, our first stop was at a grocery store to buy food for the prisoners. Businesses linked to army officers are supposed to feed all the prisoners, we were told. But as they steal most of the funds, leaving only starvation rations, prisoners must be fed by their relations and friends.

The guards made no objection to two overseas visitors entering the prison. Because many of the inmates are internationally known, the authorities appear to treat them better than they do left-wing detainees elsewhere in the Philippines. The 11 share a communal block with basic kitchen and bathroom facilities. Their families can sleep and eat with them much of the time, and they are allowed access to television, word processors, books, and periodicals on a relatively unrestricted basis.

Most of the detainees we spoke to had first become politically active on the side of the peasants and workers as students in the late 1960s and early 1970s. After Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and assumed dictatorial powers they had gone underground to continue the struggle.

Some of the prisoners, such as Rafael Baylosis, had been captured and detained during the early years of the Marcos dictatorship, but subsequently escaped or were released. They did not reappear in public until the cease-fire, negotiated between the NPA and the Aquino government at the end of 1986.

Jorge Madlos served as a spokesman for the National Democratic Front on the island of Mindanao during the cease-fire. In July 1988 he was arrested near the University of the Philippines in Quezon City, not far from Camp Crame. He was held in a windowless cell and denied access to a lawyer for nine days while his captors debated what to do with him. Those captured with him were tortured, Madlos explained, but he was left alone as he was ill with a urinary tract infection and could not walk properly. Madlos was illegally held for five months before charges were brought.

Under the Marcos dictatorship, known opponents of the regime would frequently be arrested and held indefinitely without trial. But to continue doing this has become politically more difficult for the military under the Aquino government, because of Aquino's need to preserve at least the appearance of the rule of law.

Victims of frame-up

The government has gotten around this by framing up suspected supporters of the CPP under one of the undemocratic laws from the Marcos era. By charging them with "illegal possession of firearms for the furtherance of rebellion," which carries a possible life sentence, troublesome opponents can be held without bail pending trial.

Rodolfo Salas, for example, the longest-held of the prisoners who was arrested in September 1986 during the peace talks while having medical treatment at a Manila hospital, is accused of being in possession of four bullets. In his case a court granted him provisional bail, but the army simply refused to release him.

Baylosis, de Vera, Marco Palo, and four others were arrested in Manila on March 29 last year. After being taken away their houses were illegally searched without witnesses present and their property confiscated. Subsequently, the army claimed to have found an assault rifle and some grenades during their search.

Baylosis, Palo, and de Vera said that when they requested their trial judge to set aside the illegally obtained evidence he refused, ruling that the search was justified in their case because firearms were supposedly found.

The defendants are appealing this decision to the Supreme Court. They are demanding that the government and its courts uphold their own constitution, said Baylosis, and grant them at least provisional liberty.

Baylosis said the real charge against them is that they are ranking leaders of the CPP. For this reason, he said, he was not optimistic that their constitutional rights would be upheld and that they would be released.

Using courtroom as platform for views

He expressed interest in books published by Pathfinder that record how working-class leaders from Fidel Castro to Nelson Mandela to Farrell Dobbs used the courtroom as a platform to present their revolutionary views to the people. The New York-based publisher puts out books that contain Castro's 1953 "History Will Absolve Me" and Mandela's 1962 "The Struggle Is My Life" statements made during their trials, and Dobbs' 1981 testimony in the Socialist Workers Party suit against FBI harassment.

The prisoners expressed their solidarity with Mark Curtis' fight for justice. They said they had read about Curtis' case as they had been receiving the *Militant* in the prison.

Subsequent to our visit, the Committee for the Defense and Freedom of Rafael Baylosis, Benjamin de Vera, and Marco Palo was established. Messages of support to the committee, or letters to any of the prisoners, should be sent c/o Betty de Vera, KAPATID office, 44 Banahaw St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines.

Regional strike support rally draws 450 at Newark

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists members struck Eastern Airlines March 4 in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

Backed by flight attendants and pilots, the walkout crippled Eastern, grounding a big major-

SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

ity of its 1,040 prestrike daily flights.

Since July Eastern has been trying to restart operations. By August 15 it was scheduling 390 daily flights.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States and Canada. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

More than 450 Eastern strikers and supporting unionists from around the Northeast demonstrated August 4 in Newark, New Jersey, to show their determination to continue fighting Eastern's union-busting and to mark the five-month anniversary of the strike.

The event started off with a rally

held in one of the Sheraton Hotel's main meeting rooms, near Newark International Airport. Among those who joined the scores of strikers from Newark were 25 Eastern strikers from Philadelphia; three from Buffalo, New York; and more than a dozen from La Guardia and Kennedy airports in New York. A group of striking Pittston coal miners and their families, rail workers, Communications Workers of America members, many construction workers from Laborers' Local 472, and several United Paperworkers International Union members were also there, as were auto workers, operating engineers, government workers, several union members visiting from Britain, and other unionists. The room, decorated with "Stop Lorenzo" balloons and streamers, was filled to overflowing.

The rally program, which featured speakers from the striking unions and other labor officials, was chaired by Machinists Local 1445 strike coordinator Frank DeMaria.

"The same circumstances that put us on strike are still there," Eastern pilot John Anderson told the rally. "They haven't changed. Have they changed?" The crowd roared back, "No!" Striking Pittston miner Ed Rose, who was greeted with a standing ovation, also spoke.

The speakers were barely able to conclude their remarks before rally participants, eager to start marching, began to stream out of the hotel. Chanting and waving signs and banners, the workers marched down the main highway leading to the Newark airport, slowing Friday after-

noon rush-hour traffic. Along the way, truckers and motorists honked their horns and waved in support.

The demonstrators, however, were prevented from marching to the airport itself by police and airport authorities. Hundreds of cops were mobilized to keep the march from proceeding onto airport property.

Workers in Helper, Utah, who are trying to organize a United Mine Workers of America local at Jennmar Corp. recently sent a message of solidarity to Eastern strikers and to UMWA District 28, where Pittston miners are on strike. Jennmar is the largest manufacturer of coal mine roof bolts and plates for the coal operators in the western states.

"The UMWA In-House Organizing Committee at Jennmar Corp. extends our fullest solidarity to your

struggle for justice," the message said. "Our employer has tried to scare us from joining the union by holding up your strikes as reasons not to go union. We have, however, drawn nothing but inspiration from your fights on behalf of your members and all the rest of us. We know that your victories will make our struggles that much easier. An injury to one is an injury to all!"

On August 1 Eastern strikers and supporters organized expanded picket lines at Baltimore-Washington International Airport to respond to the start-up of flights there for the first time since the strike began. Three daily flights to and from Atlanta are planned by Eastern. The first day, however, one of the flights was canceled.

Responding to IAM Local 846's

call to strengthen the picket line, 50 members of more than a dozen unions came in the morning and 30 in the afternoon. Normally, picketing is limited by airport authorities to six people. The picket lines were covered on both the noon and evening television news programs and by the *Baltimore Sun*.

Fifty striking flight attendants and pilots traveled to Nantucket, Massachusetts, July 29 to greet Frank Lorenzo at his home there, reported Boston-based Machinists Local 1726's Strike Bulletin recently. Texas Air Corp. Chairman Lorenzo called local cops to escort him from his home because, according to police, he felt threatened by the strikers.

Afterward, strikers went into town and sold "Stop Lorenzo" T-shirts and talked to Nantucket residents about the strike.

A Women's Solidarity Day picket line was held at San Francisco International Airport July 29, called by the Coalition of Labor Union Women and IAM Local 1781. About 50 strikers and supporters marched, chanting, "No more concessions! Shut Lorenzo down!" Meat-packers, oil workers, garment workers, and others participated.

Amy Belvin from San Francisco, Rachele Fruit from Baltimore, and Dave Hurst from Price, Utah, contributed to this column.



August 4 strike support march in Newark

Militant/Jane Harris

New York Eastern strikers to picket subcontractor

BY SUSAN LaMONT

NEW YORK — Striking Eastern Airlines workers at La Guardia Airport are going to begin regular picketing of Hudson General facilities there. Hudson is the main subcontractor doing ramp and cleaning work and fueling for Eastern Airlines in New York.

Hudson workers — like 8,300 of the Eastern strikers — are members of the International Association of Machinists.

In July Eastern resumed a significant number of flights for the first time since the strike by Machinists union members, flight attendants, and pilots began March 4. To service the flights, Eastern has hired companies like Hudson General, Ogden Allied Services, and Servair in cities around the country to do jobs previously performed by Eastern IAM members. Management personnel and some scabs are also doing much of this work.

Eastern strikers are outraged that companies organized by the IAM are doing subcontracting work for Eastern.

"Members of our local — and strikers in other cities too — are pressing IAM officials to take steps to stop the undermining of the strike by such measures," said Ernest Mailhot August 16. Mailhot is a member of IAM Local 1018's strike committee at La Guardia. "Many pilots here have also been urging the IAM to fight to bring this to a halt. If strikers and IAM members at the subcontracting companies work together, it can be done."

Local 1018 will be distributing a leaflet to the Hudson workers explaining the issues in the Eastern strike, and appealing for their support. Indications are that many Hudson workers oppose being forced to do struck work and are also looking for ways — if they are backed up by the union — to support the Eastern strikers.

More pilots, attendants cross line

The fight to keep IAM-organized subcontractors from doing work at Eastern is just one of the serious challenges facing Eastern strikers after nearly six months on the picket lines.

The erosion of support from Air Line Pilots Association officials is another.

During the first 10 days of August, more than 200 pilots crossed picket lines, bringing the total number of pilots who have crossed to 600. This figure includes 200 management and regular pilots who stayed on the job when the strike started and 175 to 200 pilots who

crossed between March and July.

In early August ALPA President Henry Duffy met with the Eastern pilots' leadership in Washington, D.C., and urged them to find a way to end the strike and return to work.

The Eastern pilots' Master Executive Council responded by calling on Duffy to poll all 41,000 ALPA members to see if enough support exists for a national pilots' one-day work stoppage, called an "SOS."

Eastern pilots from Miami and Atlanta sent messages to the ALPA leadership saying that they would rather see the airline liquidated than go back to work for Frank Lorenzo. Lorenzo heads Texas Air Corp., which owns both Eastern and Continental.

On August 5 the Eastern pilots' MEC voted unanimously against a return to work.

Two days later 1,000 pilots and spouses meeting in Atlanta cheered when an ALPA official asked whether they wanted to continue the walkout. "Duffy can't force us back," Eastern ALPA spokesman Dan Ashby told the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*. "We can't have the national leadership stand back and let the individual airline [locals] fight their own battles." Eastern pilots in other cities also voted to remain out.

Roughly 2,800 ALPA members are still on strike at Eastern, though some have since gotten other jobs.

Pilots at La Guardia and in other cities who remain committed to the strike have been canvassing pilots at other airlines, urging them to back the SOS work stoppage by sending telegrams to Duffy. The ALPA national leadership is supposed to meet August 17-18 to consider the Eastern pilots' request for a poll on the action.

Hundreds of striking Eastern flight attendants, members of Transport Workers Union Local 553, also crossed picket lines in early August, in some cases encouraged by returning pilots. At least 1,300 out of 5,700 flight attendants have now crossed the picket lines.

Less than 200 IAM members have returned to work.

More flights

The continued start-up of flights poses another major challenge to the strikers.

On August 15 Eastern increased its daily flights from 350 to 390, up from 226 in July. Some 600 are projected for September 7.

Lorenzo's strike-breaking "reorganiza-

tion" plan calls for 800 flights by the end of the year.

Eastern says its July flights were 75 percent full and that it intends to continue discount tickets to help fill the added flights.

At the same time, the lack of qualified aircraft mechanics is posing problems for Eastern, which is trying to meet its flight schedule with planes that have been sitting on the ground in some cases for months. Eastern President Philip Bakes said August 11 that lack of skilled mechanics and other maintenance personnel were now Eastern's biggest problem.

Because it doesn't have enough airworthy planes and mechanics to keep them going, Eastern has announced it would lease another 10 planes and pilots and flight attendants from Continental to meet its September projections, in addition to the five leased in August.

Local 1018 members picketed two scab hiring sessions for mechanics held by Eastern inside La Guardia terminal August 16. "Only

eight or so people total even came to apply," reported Local 1018 member Susan Annuth afterward. "Several people left after we talked to them about the strike and why they shouldn't scab. Another few said they would think seriously about what we said, and only a couple were hostile."

Telephone strike

Eastern strikers in New York and other cities have been fighting to strengthen picket lines and build other strike-support actions to respond to the new flights.

In recent days, strikers from La Guardia have joined with striking telephone workers and hospital workers at rallies and mass pickets, actions that striking Pittston coal miners from Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky have also participated in.

The next major demonstration to support workers on strike in New York will be the September 4 Labor Day march in Manhattan, called by the New York Central Labor Council.

Continued on Page 10

10,000 strikers march in New York

BY JON HILLSON

NEW YORK — Thousands of striking hospital and telephone workers were joined by Eastern Airlines strikers and a group of miners on strike against Pittston coal company in a militant march that stopped business as usual in lower Manhattan August 14.

The crowd — 10,000 strong — marched from City Hall down Broadway to a labor solidarity rally in Battery Park. The event was hosted by Local 1199 Hospital and Health Care Employees Union and the Communications Workers of America. CWA members are on strike at Nynex and three other regional telephone companies.

The rally kicked off a three-day strike by 43,000 members of Local 1199 against the League of Voluntary Hospitals in New York. Local 1199 President Dennis Rivera announced to a roar of applause the decision by the management at Bronx-Lebanon Hospital, where 1,800 union members work, to break ranks with the league and sign a contract. The hospital agreed to the union's demand for a 17 percent wage increase over two years. A small nursing home also signed with the union.

CWA and Local 1199 members marched with signs that said, "Fighting back for quality health care." The telephone workers are resisting company demands that they pay more for medical care and accept other cuts in health benefits.

"Telephone workers, hospital workers, pilots who fly planes, the machinists who repair them, the miners who dig coal, we're all in this together," CWA Vice-president Jan Pierce told the cheering crowd. "We will not be divided."

United Mine Workers of America President Richard Trumka also spoke. "Those who say there is no link between New York hospital workers and coal miners from Appalachia are wrong," he said.

"We're still holding strong," said a striking Eastern Machinist as he was marching toward the park. These demonstrations "help make people aware we are still out and are a morale booster for all of us," he added.

Striking telephone workers, Eastern strikers, and Local 1199 members had joined ranks for a demonstration of 5,000 that marched down Wall Street August 10.

Nissan auto workers reject union bid to organize plant

BY JEFF POWERS

SMYRNA, Tenn. — Workers at Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corp.'s auto assembly plant here voted last month 1,622 to 711 against union representation. The vote came after a five-year effort by the United Auto Workers union to organize the plant and was widely reported as a significant setback for the union.

The UAW allocated significant resources to the organizing effort. For almost a year, 34 full-time organizers were on staff in Smyrna, which lies 15 miles outside Nashville. The union boasted an in-plant organizing committee of 164 workers.

Union organizers distributed thousands of leaflets and brochures and paid for radio and television commercials urging a pro-UAW vote. Top union officials, including President Owen Bieber, came to Smyrna. Hundreds of house meetings were organized to try to firm up support.

On election day, union organizers, while expecting a close vote, confidently predicted victory. The company, however, carried the day.

After the defeat UAW officials said that Nissan had intimidated workers and created a "climate of fear" inside the plant, leading to the union's loss.

Challenge to union

The UAW faced a difficult challenge in organizing the plant.

Wages, which range from \$12 to \$16 an hour, are among the highest in Tennessee. Since the plant opened in 1980, there have been no layoffs.

In addition, the company is involved in a major expansion of the plant that is projected to almost double production and add 2,000 new jobs, making it the largest auto assembly plant in the country.

Many workers at Nissan moved to Smyrna

from outlying areas when they were hired and took out mortgages to buy houses. The weight of these and other debts was felt during the campaign.

"Nissan scared those folks, saying if the union came in there would be layoffs," one UAW organizer explained. "If that happened, they would lose everything."

Nissan's effort to keep the union out was also firmly backed by the state's capitalist politicians and media.

Health and safety

The main issues around which union organizers fought to win support for the UAW were health and safety and seniority rights.

Getting a union contract, UAW leaflets said, would prevent the company from "trying to run the line too fast," by giving workers an "effective voice" to "slow it down."

Also, if jobs were too difficult or overloaded, workers could file an "overwork grievance." In addition, another union leaflet explained, the "International will train local officials to become time study people. If necessary, the International will come directly into the plant to time jobs."

Nissan workers suffer an exorbitant number of job-related injuries, the UAW said. Union supporters petitioned the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration to provide a log of all workers injured in the plant. The company — despite a \$5,000 fine by OSHA — refused to provide this information, citing employees' right to privacy as an excuse. The company is contesting the fine.

In one leaflet about a worker named Richard Davidson, the union described what happens to disabled workers at Nissan. Davidson was hurt on the job putting crankshafts into trucks. "After surgery I was put on light duty driving trucks off the line because I can't stand too long," he explained in the leaflet.



The assembly line at Nissan's Smyrna, Tennessee, plant.

Eventually Davidson was told to return to his old job. When he told the company he could no longer do it, he was laid off. He will receive two-thirds of his pay for 30 months for his disability. After that, Nissan is free from its obligation to him.

"Under the contract you sign when you hire in at Nissan, you can be laid off at any time, for any reason, especially if you can no longer perform the job you were hired in for," explained one UAW organizer.

"Without your union, your supervisor determines your shift," said another UAW leaflet. Having a union allows workers to use seniority to determine their shift. Layoffs and job assignments would also be determined by seniority under a union contract, the UAW argued.

The Nissan plant has discriminatory policies, explained another union organizer. Although 12 percent of the workers are Black, none are in the skilled trades. Until recently only one woman was in the skilled trades, although 500 women work in the plant.

'Labor-management cooperation'

Despite the problems faced by workers at Nissan, the union fared badly in the election. One reason was union officials' commitment to the "team concept" now widely used in

auto plants throughout the United States, including at Smyrna.

We are now in a new era of labor-management cooperation, UAW officials frequently explain, adding that the old methods of "confrontation" are no longer applicable.

With this approach, the UAW could not effectively argue against Nissan's propaganda that workers do not need a union to represent them. In fact, UAW organizers often said that a union at Nissan would improve cooperation between labor and management.

When the company claimed bringing in a union would mean strikes at Nissan, the UAW responded that there has not been a major auto strike in 20 years.

UAW efforts in Smyrna were not helped by the union's failure to win fights aimed at slowing line speeds at Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors plants. Job-related injuries suffered by Nissan workers are experienced by workers in UAW-represented auto plants. The union leadership has done little to fight the job combinations and speedup responsible for these often crippling injuries.

During the organizing drive, the union also pointed to the Japanese ownership of Nissan as a reason to vote for the UAW. "Pressure for more productivity in Smyrna comes from persons unknown — 6,000 miles away," said one union leaflet.

The UAW plans to keep a staff of three organizers in Smyrna for the time being. A year from now, it can petition the National Labor Relations Board for another election. The union has yet to decide if it will do this.

Conditions in the plant will undoubtedly worsen. Immediately following the UAW's defeat, the company increased the line speed by two cars an hour without creating one new job.

Jeff Powers is a member of UAW Local 174 at Lear Siegler in Detroit.

NUMMI workers evaluate setback

BY GEORGE JOHNSON

FREMONT, Calif. — Many workers at the New United Motor Manufacturing Inc. auto assembly plant here closely watched reports of failed efforts by the United Auto Workers to organize workers at the Nissan auto plant in Smyrna, Tennessee.

NUMMI is a joint venture of General Motors and Toyota, owned half by each. It is often held up as a model of labor relations and productivity by the auto bosses and capitalist media and by top UAW officials, as well.

Most UAW members at NUMMI consider the union here to be much too weak. Despite this, a big majority were bothered that other auto workers would vote down the union.

"They'll change their minds after a little more experience without any union at all," said one member of UAW Local 2244 here. Many pointed to Nissan's antiunion screening in hiring and the relatively high wages workers in Smyrna earn in "right to work" Tennessee as reasons for the union's defeat.

Many NUMMI workers also blamed the policies of the UAW officialdom for the failure. It was widely reported here that the UAW was campaigning at Nissan against job overloading and high line speed, and the consequent repetitive motion injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome and "tennis elbow."

"Who could believe that?" asked one worker. "The union doesn't protect us against job overloads and injuries. How could it be any different at Nissan?"

NUMMI brags that in each worker's minute on the job, all but two seconds are "productive." Two seconds isn't much time if a part is dropped or something doesn't fit right. And some jobs don't even have that.

Workers on many jobs are always behind, or running to "stay out of the hole." This work pace causes physical and emotional stress. Everyone here knows someone who has been driven out, fired, or encouraged to quit because of wrist, elbow, back, or shoulder injuries. Turnover at NUMMI runs at 25 percent per year.

The UAW made much of Nissan's refusal to report repetitive-motion injuries at Smyrna. But NUMMI doesn't report them either. Nor does the joint safety committee here, which has but one union representative on it, appointed by the UAW International. Many workers here say the safety committee helps the company cover up injury rates.

At both UAW-organized NUMMI and nonunion Nissan, work is organized by "team

concept," an example of cooperation between company and workers promoted by both auto bosses and the UAW. Despite claims that the team concept gives workers more say over line speed and job loads, experience here has shown that a killing work pace is its actual result.

George Johnson is a member of UAW Local 2244 at NUMMI.

200,000 phone workers strike across U.S.

Continued from front page

13,000 workers at Illinois Bell. IBEW officials there have authorized union members to cross the Communications Workers' picket lines and work.

'Health care for all'

The companies are proposing that workers begin paying part of medical insurance premiums for the first time. In addition, they are demanding that employees pay a certain amount of their medical costs before insurance payments kick in — up to \$2,400 a year for a family by the end of the contract. They also insist that workers accept limits on what their medical insurance will cover and the type of coverage offered.

At one of Nynex's buildings in lower Manhattan, strikers wore picket signs demanding "Health care for all — not health cuts at Nynex."

"We knew we would have to strike," said Lu Benitez, a switching equipment technician who has worked at the phone company for 20 years. "The company was adamant about cutting our medical benefits. But this is just a foot in the door. If we give in on this, where will it end?"

Workers at Pacific Telesis are also opposing the company's offer of pay raises that would widen the difference in wages between job categories where most men work and

those where most workers are women. "The compensation offer they made would have widened the pay gap by giving a lower rise in base wage to the people who earn less now, predominantly women," explained California CWA representative Vira Milerida.

A tentative agreement between BellSouth and 64,000 workers was announced August 5, averting a strike in the Southeast.

Tentative contracts were reached on August 13 between US West and unions representing 42,000 workers in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

The same day the CWA and Southwestern Bell Corp. announced a tentative pact covering 41,000 workers in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. Details on these agreements are not yet available.

'Baby Bells'

The seven regional phone companies — known as "Baby Bells" — were created in 1984 when American Telephone and Telegraph — "Ma Bell" — was broken up by court order. AT&T now handles long-distance phone and information service, and the regional companies provide customers with the dial tone and handle local calls.

In May the CWA and IBEW reached a new three-year agreement with AT&T that covers

160,000 workers. Union resistance to AT&T's demands that workers pay more for health care forced the company to back down on that issue.

For the first time, the two unions negotiated jointly with AT&T. "This proves how successful we can be if we stick together," commented CWA President Morton Bahr when the agreement was announced. The CWA and IBEW are also bargaining jointly with Nynex for the first time.

Rallies, mass pickets

Since the walkouts began, strikers have organized rallies and mass picket lines in New York; Boston; Los Angeles; Pittsburgh; Newark, New Jersey; and other cities, and more are planned. In some cities, striking Eastern Airlines workers and miners on strike at Pittston coal company have joined the telephone workers' actions.

Strikers in the Boston area report heavy police presence and harassment at the picket lines; dozens of strikers have been arrested. Nynex and Bell Atlantic are both charging the strikers with vandalism, including severing cables.

On August 15 Edward Horgan, a CWA striker on picket duty in Westchester County, New York, died after being struck the previous day by a car driven through the picket line by a scab.

Cuban women gain under 30 years of revolution

Interview with two leaders of Federation of Cuban Women during

BY JON HILLSON

NEW YORK — There's hardly a topic more heatedly debated today than the role, status, and rights of women in society.

The views of the leadership of the Cuban revolution on questions at issue in this battle were recently explained by two leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) who spoke at meetings in numerous U.S. cities last June. Their tour was sponsored by the U.S.-Cuba Woman's Exchange, Venceremos Brigade, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

In an interview following a meeting here,

world. The state, Aguilar said, has no population policy; it has "no opinion" on whether or not any woman should have children.

- A big increase of women in the labor force, which is now 39 percent female.

- The lifting, after a campaign by the FMC, of the last "official barriers" to women working in "nontraditional" jobs. In the last three years, the number of female construction workers, many of whom have been trained as masons, plumbers, carpenters, and heavy-equipment operators, has increased by 25,000.

- The massive involvement of women in

as many of the violence-inducing pressures that exist in capitalist society have been dramatically reduced.

Society responsible for domestic tasks

The FMC, Aguilar said, backed by the Cuban Communist Party, believes "society has the responsibility to assume domestic tasks and childhood education," thus freeing women to participate fully in economic, social, and political life. The resources must be made available to accomplish this, she said. The FMC does not agree with those who "blame women for certain problems and want women to return to the home," Aguilar stressed.

It's this perspective of full participation by women that Cuba seeks to advance in the international battle for women's liberation.

"We know about the debate taking place here in the United States," Aguilar said, "but this is a debate taking place in the world. It's not just in the capitalist countries, but the socialist countries, too. We know there are women who share our views in North America."

"We have," Aguilar noted, "taken a very clear stand so that there can be no doubt, nationally or internationally. We say that in the tasks of the second millennium, in the year 2000, it's not possible for women to take one step backward."

A question of principle

Insuring the practical exercise of full human rights for women, Aguilar said, "is primary, a question of principle. If we don't achieve this we think the revolution is not complete and that it would not be a revolution. This is of such magnitude, it's a question of the principles of the Communist Party of Cuba."

The stance of the Cuban party, both in Cuba and the world, she said, is that "the place of women and the place of men is exactly the same: to create a new society, to create together from a basis of strict equality and strict respect." Aguilar is a member of the Cuban CP.

A key to fighting for this goal is understanding "the position women lost in history," Aguilar said. It is important also to realize, she added, that communists "don't have recipes for the future, that in the future families will be like this or that."

"Now," she continued, "we are dealing with present problems. The commitment we've made to future generations is that we cannot turn over a worse society than the one we received."

This struggle implies male responsibility, Aguilar said, noting that the oppression of women has made men "miss out on the best of life."

And it is a struggle, still. The FMC confronts the "double burden" of women carrying the load of work in the home as well as on the job.

'Revolution in the family'

This point will be taken up at the March 1990 FMC congress, at which delegates representing the organization's 3.3 million members will discuss this and other challenges under the theme "a revolution in the family." The aim of this revolution is to further liberate Cuban women to more "fully participate in the revolutionary process," Aguilar said.

The congress will also discuss promoting women in employment. Cuban law prohibits sexual discrimination in employment and mandates equal pay. But the legacy and vestiges of women's oppression and the impact of the double burden have tended to concentrate female employment in the services and lower rungs of the professions.

These jobs pay less, resulting in an "average lower wage" for women, Catherine Ribas said.

Rectification

The FMC congress will also discuss incorporating farm women into production, combatting sex role stereotyping of women in Cuban film and television, and the large number of teenage pregnancies. These and other topics will be debated in the context of the

rectification process taking place in Cuba. This is the society-wide effort launched by the Cuban CP in 1986 to strengthen the struggle toward socialism by placing working people and their conscious political action at the center of the revolutionary process.

Aguilar described some of the background to this process.

She began with the pioneering role of the Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary Ernesto Che Guevara in developing the "budgetary finance system" of economic management in the early years of the revolution.

This stressed developing working-class consciousness as the most fundamental challenge in carrying through the transformation of the economic and social relations inherited from capitalism in the process of establishing socialism.

For this reason, Che, and others in the Cuban leadership who agreed with him, rejected the concept of attempting to spur productivity by increasing wage differentials and paying individual bonuses as incentives.

Such capitalist methods, Che argued, would not and could not develop socialist consciousness. Guevara left Cuba in 1965 to continue his revolutionary activity in Latin America. He was murdered by U.S.-organized forces in Bolivia in 1967, and the system of economic management he fought for "didn't keep developing," Aguilar explained.

In time, it was supplanted by another political perspective that emphasized wage bonuses and other material incentives as the road to increased production, economic development, and socialism.

In 1976, Aguilar continued, Cuba implemented the Economic Management and Planning System, based on these concepts, to guide the country's economy. This, she said, "introduced capitalist aspects in production" in an expanded way. And this resulted in unanticipated and serious problems.

Agricultural production was deformed, Aguilar said, creating "millionaire" or capitalist farmers, along with middlemen who engaged in lucrative speculation.

"There were errors having to do with production," Aguilar said, as planning became more bureaucratized, inefficient, and incoherent, introducing "economic errors that were holding back development."

Social needs were unmet

"Red lights began to flash," the FMC leader said. On the one hand, a layer of farmers was getting rich, yet there were shortages of certain produce. Social needs were going unmet. Women had begun "demanding day-care centers," the construction of which had ground to a standstill.

It was argued, Aguilar said, "that there were 'priorities' that were more important, according to the economic plan."

The negative effects of this approach fanned throughout society, she said. In the FMC, "our work developed into a schema," as Cuban women became the object of directives. An attitude of indifference to criticism became widespread.

"And we were very clear there were no economic problems, none at all," Aguilar said wryly.

The aim of the rectification process, she said, is to "recover lost terrain" and to advance.

A concrete example of this is the revival of the volunteer construction crews — the minibrigades — which in Havana alone have built scores of day-care centers and thousands of apartment units.

There's a renewed emphasis on moral incentives and the need to develop political consciousness to combat the inequalities and abuses that grew up in the period of almost exclusive reliance on wage rewards and financial bonuses.

These changes are a product of deepgoing organized discussions led by Cuban communists in Cuba's workplaces, unions, farmers' organizations, youth movement, and professional groups on the aims, scope, and methods of rectification.

Isn't one of the most "revolutionary aspects" of rectification that it makes possible



Carolina Aguilar (center), leader of Federation of Cuban Women, and Catherine Ribas (right), FMC's North American department head, at New York forum. Olga Sanabria of Puerto Rican Socialist Party translates.

they fielded questions in a wide-ranging informal discussion with political activists.

In the New York meeting, Carolina Aguilar, a founding member of the FMC and current member of its national leadership, and Catherine Ribas, head of the North American department of the FMC, highlighted the gains Cuban women have made since the triumph of the 1959 revolution that swept the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship from power.

Among them are:

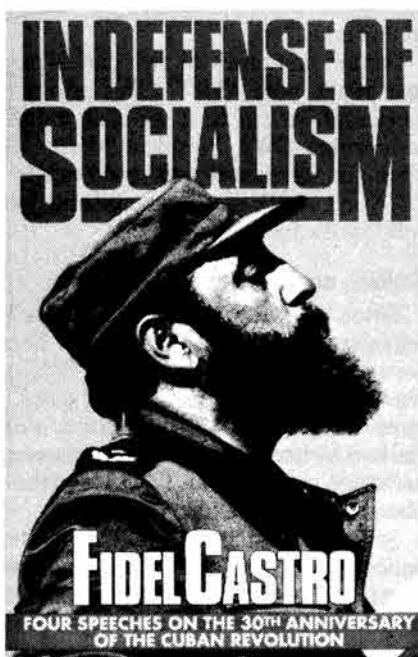
- The right of Cuban women to choose whether or not to have children. This includes the right to abortion, which is legal and free (as is all health care), easy access to inexpensive birth control, as well as one of the most comprehensive child-care systems in the

national defense. Three of every four militia reservists are female, Ribas said, and all-women units from the regular armed forces both fought in Angola and now make up anti-aircraft defense units for the country's capital, Havana, and at the border of the U.S.-occupied, 5,000-troop military base at Guantánamo.

- The participation of tens of thousands of women in the minibrigade movement, which mobilizes Cubans of all ages and occupations to volunteer their labor and skills to build facilities that are socially needed. Ribas said this meant that 111 day-care centers in Havana, servicing more than 20,000 children, were constructed from 1987 to 1988.

- A decrease in violence against women

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their U.S. tour

the participation of millions of Cubans in collectively resolving the economic and social problems they face, the two women were asked.

"Exactly," Catherine Ribas replied. "You know, we keep being criticized because we haven't adopted perestroika. Before, when we copied models, we were a 'satellite' of the Soviet Union. But now, when we do things our own way, when we develop *our own model*, they criticize us because we haven't followed the perestroika model."

'Deeper links' with women

"The spirit of rectification is to renew socialism," Aguilar stressed. For the FMC, this means greater "creativity," in its work, "deeper links" with Cuban women, a "real elimination of bureaucracy."

The FMC must, she said, "shed light on the place of women in Cuban society" and the "contradictions" to their liberation that remain "in the socialist countries," including Cuba.

"We've been a little closed," Aguilar said of the FMC. But now, "we try to understand every point of view, respecting each one, and we've achieved much, much more. This has enriched our revolutionary theory and practice and made it much more deeply socialist."

"There was a time in the FMC," Aguilar said, "when the subject of lesbianism came up, and it would be dismissed 'out of hand.'"

"But we have to respect every aspect of the personality," she continued. "Socialism doesn't say 'socialize everything.' Socialism, above all else, respects the person. It strives to eliminate self-centered 'individualism,' but not the individual."

In raising these ideas on their tour, the two Cuban women discovered, "We have many points in common with [U.S.] feminists, as do many feminists with us," Aguilar said.

'Best of feminism lives'

"We have read in the *New York Times* that feminism is over, buried, that feminism is lost, that North American women have lost the battle," Aguilar said. "But I have seen here that the best of feminism lives, a feminism that links itself to social liberation, to economic and social reality."

Two decades of struggle, she said, have forged "the best of feminism of North American women," who realize their problems can't be solved "in isolation from the problems of their class comrades, their comrades in oppression and exploitation."

The impact of these struggles, Ribas added, has been to "question the establishment, the system. This is a forward step."

Through such struggle, she said, "women can conquer certain rights."

But U.S. women, Ribas noted, "aren't going to achieve full participation until there's a revolution in the United States."

Those who met with Aguilar and Ribas got to hear about the gains of the Cuban revolution and appreciated the opportunity to do so — since Washington regularly blocks such tours. It took a national campaign to secure visas for the two Cuban women.

Both of them expressed gratitude that they'd been able to learn more about what's happening in the United States. Each had been here a couple of times over the past decade.

Arriving in the United States, Aguilar said, there was an unexpected surprise. "We get to the Miami airport and there are signs and buttons: 'Down with Lorenzo.'" The two Cubans saw dozens of planes immobilized on the ground.

There's been some information in Cuba on the Eastern Airlines strike, but she wasn't sure "who this poor Lorenzo was," until a walk through the airport, she said with a laugh.

As the tour continued, Aguilar said, they learned of the Pittston coal miners' strike. "We see in the miners' strike people who are struggling," she said, "it's very impressive."

Both said they were stunned by the scope of homelessness, a phenomenon that doesn't exist in Cuba.

The two Cubans participated in warm, friendly exchanges at meetings in Atlanta at Spellman College, a Black women's school, and in Washington, D.C., with leaders of the



Militant/Selva Nebbia

Three workers at the Tinima brewery in Camagüey, Cuba. Women now make up 39 percent of the Cuban work force.

National Council of Negro Women.

"We felt in these two places," Ribas said, "that the participation of Cuba in support of the Angolan people has brought us closer to the Blacks of the United States, that through participation in the southern Africa struggle, [U.S.] Black people feel more free."

Aguilar and Ribas also met with leaders of

the National Organization for Women in Washington, D.C. "We heard about the [April 9] women's march for abortion rights," Ribas said. "We heard it was 300,000, not 600,000. But here, we've been able to talk with people who were on the march and have seen videos. It's very impressive that it included young, old, workers, middle-class, men and women,

Black and white — that everyone was able to unite around one theme."

"I think that the march on Washington," Ribas said, "is a measure of to what extent people can stand no more."

"Our impression," Aguilar concluded, "is that there is a resurgence of social struggle in the United States."

Video on Cuban-Angolan victory over South Africa at Cuito Cuanavale is widely distributed

BY RONI McCANN

Referring to the three-hour TV documentary *Response to the South African Escalation*, produced by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, a review in *Sechaba* called the film "a tool for winning a broader understanding of the events that brought South Africa to the negotiating table." *Sechaba* is the national organ of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

The video, promoted and distributed by Pathfinder, was first shown in the United States in September 1988 and has since been viewed in cities around the globe.

The documentary vividly portrays the role of Cuban internationalist fighters together with Angolan troops and forces from the South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia in their victorious battle against the South African army at Cuito Cuanavale, in southern Angola.

The defeat of the apartheid forces led to the process unfolding in southwest Africa today, where the Namibian people, led by SWAPO, are pushing forward in their struggle to end decades of colonial rule by the South African regime.

To date the Cuban-made video has been shown in more than 35 U.S. cities, beginning with two showings at the Pathfinder Bookstore in New York attended by 600 people.

Soon afterward the Patrice Lumumba Coalition held a showing in Harlem drawing 300 people. Several Iranian political activists also gathered in New York to see the film.

Smaller meetings have taken place on college campuses, at libraries, and in farming communities, workers' homes, and the offices of political organizations.

Professors have used the video in their classes, and at least one college in California has adopted it as part of its international affairs curriculum.

Pathfinder has made the documentary available to organizations such as the ANC, SWAPO, and the Venceremos Brigade. Producers of the weekly U.S. television show "South Africa Now" continue to make use of footage from the film.

The video is available in both Spanish and English, and Pathfinder in Québec has prepared a version with a French-language soundtrack.

The film has been shown in Antigua, Australia, France, Iceland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Nicaragua, St. Vincent, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

In Britain the documentary has been presented in five cities. In addition, it was the opening event at the Eighth International Book Fair of Radical, Black, and Third World Books in Brixton, London, March 5-12.

In Canada showings have taken place in three cities.

A television station in Baden-Baden, West Germany, has contacted Pathfinder about airing the documentary on TV. Viewings there have led to an offer to put together a German-language soundtrack.

Showings are also planned in Grenada and Senegal.

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Direct mail service between U.S. and Cuba resumes after 26 years

BY BILL RAYSON

MIAMI — After 26 years of routing all Cuba-bound mail through Costa Rica and Mexico, the United States Postal Service has announced the resumption of direct, first-class delivery between Cuba and the United States.

Responding to Cuban-Americans' demands for better service and to the postal unions' calls for action against private mail delivery, the U.S. Postal Service will begin mailing airmail letters to Cuba charging a minimum 45 cents each.

This is a big savings for people in this country who want to correspond with people in Cuba. For years private companies have gouged Cuban-Americans sending mail to Cuba. One company charges \$10 for a five-day letter and \$20 for delivery in three days.

In the United States companies rendering expensive mail service to countries under U.S. government restrictions such as Nicaragua and Cuba have popped up over the years.

The issue of normalizing postal service was first raised in the postal unions with respect to Nicaragua. In 1988 national conventions of both the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and the National Postal Mailhandlers Union passed resolutions calling for the "full restoration of normal trade

relations between the United States and Nicaragua, including money orders and registered mail."

Last fall when Congress amended a trade law, exempting mail from all trade embargos, magazines, newspapers, films, and records could be received from Cuba. The Miami area APWU local responded by forming a Better Service/Secure Jobs Committee and passing a resolution for "direct mail service between the United States and both Cuba and Nicaragua, including express and registered mail."

Union activists in the committee, along with Postal Workers for Peace, an antiwar coalition within the postal unions, made numerous phone calls and wrote letters pressing for direct mail to Cuba. Activists hope to put union weight behind the effort to restore full service, including packages to Cuba.

It won't be easy to win these improvements because such steps would require negotiations and agreements with Cuban postal officials. That the U.S. State Department doesn't want. The State Department even suggested that the postal service make no public announcements about direct mail to Cuba. Postal officials did not agree to this.

Bill Rayson, a postal worker from Miami, is the national coordinator for Postal Workers for Peace.

Cuban events mark advance for socialism



Mary-Alice Waters
Militant/Margrethe Siem

Continued from Page 3

Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations, said at the rally celebrating 30 years of the Cuban revolution. "The people of Angola will never forget the Cuban people. We will always consider ourselves in the same trench, in the same struggle."

"Cuba has been the most important ally of the Puerto Rican people in the struggle for self-determination and independence," said Olga Sanabria, a member of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party Central Committee. She underscored the historical connections between the struggles of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Fred Dube, a member of the African National Congress, explained how word of the Cuban revolution trickled to Africa in the 1950s and '60s and reached young African rebels. "There was a celebration for a people we did not even know," he said. "But we did know one thing, that these people were fighting for the same thing we were fighting for, self-liberation."

Beverly Treumann, a longtime activist in the Nicaragua solidarity movement, and a new member of the Venceremos Brigade, explained why she joined the brigade and went to Cuba. "I was interested in going to Cuba," she said, "because Cuba right now is the only country in the world, and Fidel Castro is the only world leader, speaking out for and defending socialism." Treumann said the worldwide debate about socialism motivated her to take a closer look at Cuba.

Winning workers to Cuban revolution

Two union fighters at the rally touched on the opportunities to reach workers and win them to support the Cuban revolution.

Ernie Mailhot, a Machinist union member on strike against Eastern Airlines, explained how his coworkers were being changed by their struggle. Mailhot, a member of the Eastern strike committee at La Guardia Airport in New York, told about a Cuban-American coworker in Miami who had his eyes opened when Eastern forced the Machinists out on strike.

Eastern picket

Continued from Page 6

cil. A big contingent of Eastern strikers, including from Newark, New Jersey, will help lead the demonstration.

Similar actions are also planned in other cities, as strikers push to gain wider support in the labor movement and aid each others' fights. The AFL-CIO has called on "all unions on strike" in the Washington, D.C., area to join in an August 21 demonstration there.

Meanwhile, two caravans of Eastern strikers are traveling up the East Coast from Florida, stopping in cities and towns along the way to seek new support for the strike. One caravan is sponsored by the IAM and ALPA, the other by the Transport Workers Union. Both plan to travel to the United Mine Workers' Camp Solidarity in Castlewood, Virginia, at the end of August, and then participate in the New York Labor Day march and a September 6 labor action in Washington, D.C.

This coworker told Mailhot, "If I had known what I know today I would never have come to this country from Cuba." There is more openness to Cuba among workers today because of their experiences, even in the Cuban-American community of Miami, said Mailhot.

Arturo Trevino, a member of the executive of the United Farm Workers of Washington State, read greetings from his union's president, Tomás Villanueva. Trevino added comments of his own, saying "The Cuban revolution is not something that is just celebrated. It is reflected in the daily actions of the farm workers in Washington, workers across the United States, and around the world."

Don Rojas, former press secretary to the slain prime minister of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, noted Cuba's leadership in the struggle against the Third World debt. He also emphasized that without Cuba, there would not have been revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua in 1979.

'Believing in our own history'

The final rally speaker was Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The Cuban revolution made communists in other countries believe in their own history, Barnes said.

"We must grasp what great hiatus in history was closed" when the Cuban revolution triumphed. "An almost inconceivable step was taken in restarting a process that began in 1917" with the Russian revolution, he explained.

Barnes stressed what the Cuban revolution teaches through its deeds. "Ridding the earth of individualism releases all individuals to be truly human," he said, Cuba shows that "the individualism of the few and the attempt by others to ape this was a wave of the past, not the future."

From the Cubans, fighters learn "the selflessness that says the struggles of the entire world are your struggles," Barnes explained.

"The soil of this earth is damp and will remain damp with Cuban blood until final

victory," Barnes said, pointing to Cuba's internationalist missions in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Vietnam.

"They fight selflessly, not under compulsion — economic compulsion," he explained. "They fight because they believe the time has come to fight with others to end the violence of this earth."

"It is in the process of the fight that they also earn something," Barnes said. "They earn the right to say what they want to say and what they have learned about socialism, about socialism or death."

Barnes returned to the challenge events today in Cuba pose for communists worldwide. "We should understand the importance of what is happening. We should not be concerned or worried," he said.

"What is being led is not a Cultural Revolution. What is being done is something extremely deep. The Cuban toilers are taking more and more of the revolution and changing themselves in the process," Barnes explained.

"We fight with them, we learn from them, and we read their works," Barnes emphasized. This is why it is so important to publish, make available, and promote the speeches and writings of leaders of the Cuban revolution, he said.

'Duty to organize Cuba solidarity'

"It is the duty of everyone who defends the Cuban revolution to loyally build, aid, construct, and move forward" organizations in solidarity with the Cuban revolution, Barnes added.

In the process the lie that workers and farmers in the United States and elsewhere can not be won to the Cuban revolution can be shattered, the SWP leader said. "It will primarily be workers, farmers, and farm workers that will be attracted to Cuba. Cuba's doing what they intend to do. Cuba will put its mark on them. They will put their mark on the movement in solidarity with Cuba."

Defending the Cuban revolution, telling

the truth about it, and getting it known among working people "is not just a task," Barnes stressed. "It is to redeem the fighters, to redeem the blood."

On the final day of the conference, Socialist Workers Party leader James Harris outlined the international tasks and campaigns for conference participants.

The foremost responsibility and international campaign is solidarity with the Cuban revolution, Harris said. "Solidarity with the Cuban revolution is in a real sense," he emphasized, "essential work that must be carried out to build the communist movement anywhere in the world."

"Understanding the centrality of what is happening with the Cuban revolution, the rectification process, and the leadership Cuba provides on a world scale," Harris continued, "means orienting to it, giving it support, and defending it."

Harris outlined how this could be done through building and supporting organizations that exist to defend the Cuban revolution. In the United States Harris pointed to the Venceremos Brigade, the Antonio Maceo Brigade, and Casa de las Américas as such groups. In many other countries, Cuban friendship societies exist, he added.

"We support the goals of these organizations, believe that they should be carried out, and are worthy goals revolutionists should support," Harris said.

A workshop on solidarity work with the Cuban revolution was organized at the conference and well attended. The discussion reflected important progress already made and the growth of activities in support of Cuba.

Several classes on Cuba took place at the conference. They included sessions on the origins of the Cuban revolution, the process by which the capitalist class was expropriated and the socialist road begun, Che Guevara's ideas on economics and politics in the transition to socialism, and Cuba's internationalist volunteers in southern Africa.

Cuban government ministers replaced

Continued from Page 3

and the vice-ministers of the ministries of construction and of agriculture, Manuel Lanz Suárez and Julio César Balmaseda, were removed from their positions for "failing to carry out orders or recommendations," "deficiencies in their work," and "lack of abilities."

Two Soviet publications are banned

In an editorial under the headline, "A decision that cannot be postponed and that is consistent with our principles," the August 4 *Granma* explained the reasons behind the banning in Cuba of two publications from the Soviet Union.

"Beginning more than a year ago," opened the editorial, "the leadership of our party has been compelled a number of times to take up and discuss the content of some of the many Soviet publications that circulate in our country. At issue, above all, are *Moscow News* and *Sputnik*, a weekly and monthly respectively."

"Both publications put forward a point of view and positions regarding the construction of socialism based on a certain interpretation of the Soviet experience," the editorial continued. "These positions nearly always argue against or substantially diverge from our party's point of view and fundamental orientation."

"This includes our views on the ways and methods of building socialism as well as on key questions of ideology and ethics."

By virtue of international agreements 36 Soviet publications are distributed in Cuba, the editorial noted, with a total circulation of more than 16 million copies per year or 1.5 issues per Cuban.

If Cuba wanted to send the Soviet people news about Cuba, the editorial stated, and its "point of view on important questions in building socialism, we would have to send them 420 million copies of Cuban publications each year. Anyone can understand that this is materially impossible."

"As a consequence, what is known in the Soviet Union about the views of our party is fragmentary, isolated, and carefully selected and edited in their press."

Cuba rejects the articles in *Sputnik* and *Moscow News* "that give the impression that

the Soviet Union has somehow been left without a history," continued *Granma*. These articles emphasize the "idea that work has to start from zero, overcoming years of errors, crimes, misadventures, and stupidities."

"Also emphasized is the idea that the entire past must be negated so as to advance with new concepts, concepts not compromised by ideology, along the road of economic development, imitating the methods of developed capitalist countries, with all the consequences that entails."

The pages of these publications "present an apology for bourgeois democracy." "They are fascinated with life in the United States," the editorial said.

"Those in the Soviet Union who deny the leading role of the party and call for multi-party pluralism, call for freedom of action for the laws of the marketplace, praise foreign investment, rediscover private property, question internationalism, and question solidarity and aid to other countries — those people are presented in these publications as democrats, radical leftists, defenders of the interests of the people," the editorial continued.

'Perspectiva Mundial' plans special September issue on events in Cuba

The Spanish-language socialist monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* will be publishing a special 40-page issue in September. *PM* is expanding its regular 24-page format to include important information on recent events in Cuba.

The special issue will include material on the trial of former army Gen. Arnaldo Ochoa and officers in the Cuban Ministry of the Interior. Ochoa and three officers of the Cuban army and Ministry of the Interior were found guilty of drug trafficking and high treason, sentenced to death, and executed on July 13. Ten other army and Interior Ministry officials were sentenced to prison.

PM will reprint the speech given by Cuban President Fidel Castro to the Council of State in Havana on July 9 that explained the stakes

"Even proponents of domestic servitude for women are found to be represented in these publications," added *Granma*. "*Moscow News* and *Sputnik* are paving the way for those who have begun to attack Leninism and distinguish themselves by their attacks on V.I. Lenin himself."

"We would be less than truthful," *Granma* continued, "if we were to deny that such developments had not led to some problems in our country." It cited those "who are imitative in terms of solutions" and are "trying to invent here the very errors we have been spared."

The editorial said that many members of the Cuban Communist Party as well as others throughout Cuba "have for some time been applying the pressure of public opinion" and "have spoken to the Central Committee to express protests against articles" that have appeared in these publications.

"This combination of circumstances has left the leadership of our party no other alternative than to halt the circulation in our country of *Moscow News* and *Sputnik*," concluded the editorial.

in the case. The September issue of the magazine will also include the editorial "We will take exemplary measures to eradicate outrages such as this," which appeared in the June 22 *Granma*, daily newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba.

In addition, *PM* is translating and running the editorial on Cuba in the August 11 *Militant* and the report on Cuba's July 26 celebration that appeared in the same issue.

"The September issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*," explained *PM* editor Luis Madrid, "will be indispensable for our readers in understanding current developments in Cuba."

"The September issue will include a number of other articles of interest to our readers as well," added Madrid.

Rights of privacy, voluntary association at stake in 10-year harassment lawsuit

BY MARGARET JAYKO

The constitutional rights of privacy and freedom of association for working-class political organizations are at stake in a 10-year-old lawsuit against the Socialist Workers Party, still pending in federal court in Los Angeles.

The lawsuit, filed by Alan Gelfand, charges that the party is run by FBI agents and claims that the courts should therefore have the right to regulate the internal affairs of the SWP.

Instead of throwing this case out of court for the harassment lawsuit that it obviously is, federal Judge Mariana Pfaelzer has let it drag on and on, thus establishing a precedent of government intervention that threatens everyone's right to voluntary association.

One of the major issues in the case has been whether lawyers should be allowed to carry out this kind of harassment and profit from it with impunity. That's why the SWP filed a motion in 1983, following the conclusion of the trial, asking the court to rule that Gelfand and the law firm representing him, Fisher & Moest, had to pay attorneys' fees to the SWP.

The purpose of this motion was not only to recover some of the tens of thousands of dollars spent by the SWP in defending itself in the case. It was also to establish a deterrent to other lawyers taking similar disruption cases in the future.

In a victory for democratic rights and step forward toward ending such abuse, this issue has now been resolved, with Gelfand's attorneys agreeing to pay an undisclosed amount.

"A settlement has been reached on the attorneys' fees issue that is satisfactory to us,"

Trade unions, civil rights groups, and others will be affected by outcome of Gelfand case.

said Mac Warren, SWP organization secretary, in response to an inquiry from the *Militant*.

The party is continuing to press its demand that Judge Pfaelzer rule on the case.

This case poses the question of the right of political parties to function without interference from the government and its agencies, including the courts.

The SWP is the immediate target in this harassment lawsuit. But its outcome will have implications for trade unions, other political parties, civil rights organizations, farmers' groups, and similar associations.

The question of harassment lawsuits is also at issue. The SWP has spent tens of thousands of dollars and untold time and effort defending itself against this suit, which has had as one of its aims exactly that kind of disruption of the SWP's political work.

Can the courts be used for suits whose aim is to harass, financially burden, and otherwise abuse an organization? And can the lawyers who brought the case, knowing full well it



Protest by NAACP and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) against a St. Louis department store. In 1960s NAACP organized boycotts targeting racist hiring practices. A group of white merchants in Mississippi took the NAACP to court demanding payment for alleged boycott damages, using the court in attempt to break group. Similar use of courts has been employed against the Socialist Workers Party in Gelfand case.

was fraudulent, be held responsible for their actions?

Background

Alan Gelfand had entered the SWP in 1976, as part of a broader disruption campaign organized by the Workers League, a small U.S. sect, in collaboration with a British group, the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Today the main activity of the Workers League and its collaborators around the world is disrupting the work of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Mark Curtis, a packing-house worker, union militant, and political activist in Des Moines, Iowa, was framed up by cops on phony charges of rape and burglary.

Gelfand was expelled from the SWP in 1979 after he filed a legal brief in federal court charging that the party was controlled by FBI agents. The brief was designed to undercut the party's lawsuit against decades of FBI spying and disruption, which resulted in a historic ruling against the FBI in 1986.

After his expulsion, Gelfand filed a lawsuit against the SWP. He demanded that the court reinstate him into membership and remove the party's elected leadership. His constitutional rights were violated, he claimed, because the "FBI agents" in the party's leadership had expelled him.

The SWP responded by demanding that Judge Pfaelzer dismiss the case. No court, the party said, has the right to meddle in the internal affairs of a political party. Gelfand's accusation of an FBI "takeover" of the SWP was absurd, and he hadn't a shred of evidence to back it up.

The judge, however, refused to throw the case out. Gelfand, she said, must have his day in court. The court had a right to decide, the judge insisted, whether Gelfand's expulsion was proper, whether he had been dealt with fairly, and whether the elected leadership of the SWP was fit to hold office.

The trial was held in 1983, four years after Gelfand filed his suit. The judge was finally

forced to admit, after the trial was over, that Gelfand never had "a single piece of evidence" to substantiate his charges.

But the fact that the judge agreed to hear the case at all — much less let it drag on for a decade — means that a blow against democratic rights has been struck. It gives credence to the idea that it is legitimate for the courts to intervene into political organizations to decide questions of policy and membership.

What meaning does freedom of association have if a judge — not the members of an organization — can decide who does and does not belong in that organization? Or who should be elected to leadership positions? Or what the group's policies should be?

On the eve of the trial in the case, Southern Christian Leadership Conference leader Fred Taylor released a statement that said, "The trial itself is a violation of the most fundamental rights of the American people: the right of the people to band together in voluntary organizations like labor unions and civil rights organizations, and to set their own policies, elect their own leaders, and determine their own membership."

"The intervention of the U.S. District Court into this area of democratic rights is an infringement of the First Amendment rights, not just of the Socialist Workers Party, but also of the rights of all Americans."

"As a voluntary organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference could be opened up to a similar attack by the government by this type of court intervention. We know the U.S. government, through the FBI, has intervened into the SCLC by intense surveillance of our founder, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and by the use of informers."

"The SCLC would no more welcome the invasion of the rights of our organization and its members through the means of a Federal District Court. . . . Stop this travesty of justice!"

Harassment lawsuits

The SWP has not been the only victim of disruption lawsuits.

Abuse of the courts has often been used as a form of political harassment. The capitalist government, and other enemies of democratic rights with money and resources, know they can do damage to organizations and individuals fighting injustice by dragging them through burdensome and costly legal proceedings.

In Port Gibson, Mississippi, a group of white merchants sued the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1969 because of damages supposedly incurred in a boycott organized by the Black community in the late 1960s. The objective of the boycott was to force businesses to hire more Blacks and make changes in the city's government. The purpose of the merchants' suit was to cripple and if possible destroy the NAACP, thereby setting back the struggle for Black rights in the area.

A Mississippi court did in fact order the NAACP to pay the merchants \$1.25 million in damages. The NAACP was able to beat back this serious attack when the Supreme Court reversed the lower court ruling in 1982 and upheld that the boycott was a form of

"constitutionally protected activity." Over the years, however, the NAACP was forced to spend huge sums of money fighting off racist legal offensives.

'Evidence'

During the four years of legal proceedings before the trial, the court gave Gelfand's lawyers permission to interrogate SWP leaders and members for hundreds of hours on everything from their childhood activities to their views on religion and philosophy.

Although the judge herself admitted such actions were an abuse of court procedure, she allowed them to continue.

An example of the type of probing by Gelfand's attorneys is the questions asked SWP leader Doug Jenness in a deposition lasting several days. After interrogating Jenness about his adolescent years, his activity in the Boy Scouts, and his father's employment as a professor of biochemistry, Gelfand's attorney went on to ask Jenness, "Did your parents, during this period of time believe in God as a supreme being, do you know?"

The lawyer then asked Jenness whether he himself did "... still believe in God as a supreme being?"

Some 7,000 pages of such "evidence" was amassed by Gelfand and his lawyers. The judge then went on to allow similar "evidence" to be introduced in the trial itself.

Thus Gelfand and his lawyers were able to accomplish one of the aims of their lawsuit: to generate more copy for the Workers League slander operation against the SWP. Gelfand's backers have in fact published several volumes based on the "official court record" of this case.

At the conclusion of the five-day trial, the judge declared to Gelfand and his attorneys: "You have not proved anything that you said you were going to prove. Nothing. . . . I can only assume that there was a motive some-

By refusing to throw out suit, judge established precedent of court intervention.

where in here to paralyze the Socialist Workers Party.

"The whole aura of facts in here," she continued, "leads me to question the motivation for the lawsuit. If I had been presented with one single piece of evidence that [the SWP leaders] are agents of the Government, that would be an entirely different matter. I haven't had a single piece of evidence given to me."

She further stated at the trial's conclusion that she had decided to rule in favor of the SWP.

But, six years later, no decision has been handed down.

Broad defense effort

The SWP, working with others, has organized a broad campaign to explain the issues involved and to mobilize opposition to this disruption operation.

Public meetings, with platforms that reflected wide support for the party's defense, were held in more than 50 cities around the time of the trial. Many people have contributed funds to help cover the burdensome costs of the fight.

Union officials, civil rights figures, farm protest leaders, women's rights fighters, Puerto Rican activists, civil libertarians, leaders of the Native American movement, representatives of other political organizations, and elected officials have stepped forward to defend the SWP and democratic rights in this case.

Supporters include civil rights activists Anne Braden, Ben Chavis, and Robert F. Williams; labor officials David Dyson and Anthony Mazzocchi; and witch-hunt victims Frank Wilkinson and Ring Lardner, Jr.

With the 10th year approaching, there is a renewed need to spread the word about the case and the critical issues involved and to demand that the judge make her ruling.

FBI ON TRIAL

FBI on Trial: The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying
Editor: Margaret Jayko
\$9.95, 260 pp.

Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom
by Nelson Blackstock
\$8.95, 190 pp.

Available from: Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014 • 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL
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ARIZONA

Phoenix

How to Defend Women's Right to Choose Abortion. Speakers: Diane Bacon, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Communications Workers of America; Angie Barone, Universities for Choice (ASU); Nancy Best, National Organization for Women; Rena Cacoullos, Socialist Workers Party; Charles Fanniel, A. Philip Randolph Institute, Laborers' International Union; Kim Martin, Arizona Right to Choose; Louis Rhodes, American Civil Liberties Union; Chiquita Rollins, Arizona Women's Reproductive Rights. Sat., Aug. 26, 7 p.m. 1809 W Indian School Rd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 279-5850.

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Socialist Educational Weekend. "Southern Africa: The Fight for Freedom," Sat., Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m. and "The Workers' and Farmers' Government," Sun., Aug. 20, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Speaker: Malik Miah, Socialist Workers Party. All classes held at 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: Sat. eve \$3., Sun. classes \$2 each. Sponsor: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

Malcolm X. A film. Tue., Aug. 29, 7:15 and 9:15 p.m. and Wed., Aug. 30, 2:15, 7:15, and 9:15 p.m. Red Vic Movie House, 1659 Haight St. Look for the Pathfinder literature table at showings. For more information call (415) 863-3994.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Defending Revolutionary Nicaragua Today. Speaker: Rashaad Ali, chairperson Baltimore Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 27, recently returned from two-week trip to Nicaragua. Sat., Aug. 19. Dinner 6 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: dinner \$3; program \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Hear About Recent Developments in Cuba and Celebrate Gains of the Revolution. Sat., Aug. 26, 7:30 p.m. Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38th St.

St. Paul

What Can We Do to Defend Abortion Rights? Panel of speakers including Sheri Smith, Action for Abortion Rights; Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul; others. Sat., Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Protest Racist Attacks Against Democratic Rights. Speakers: Scott Dombeck, Socialist Workers Party, member Allied Industrial Workers Union Local 171; others. Sat., Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

China in Crisis: Why Chinese Students and Working People Want Democratic Rights. Speaker: Fred Feldman, author of "Behind Cri-

sis in China" series in *Militant*. Sat., Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Rock for the Radios. Benefit dance marathon for radio stations of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador. Fri., Aug. 25, 8 p.m.-4 a.m. Marc Ballroom, 27 Union Sq. W. Donation: \$12, \$15 at the door. Sponsor: Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). For more information call (212) 431-9251.

Center for Cuban Studies Benefit Party.

Speaker: Sandra Levinson, executive director of the center. Sun., Aug. 27, 12 noon to 5 p.m. Home of Carol and Ping Ferry, 385 Fort Hill Rd., Scarsdale, N.Y. Reserve a space by Aug. 22. Donation: \$25. For reservations and more information call (212) 242-0559.

TEXAS

Houston

Rally for Choice. Sat., Aug. 26, 9-11 a.m. Sam Houston Park, Bagby and Dallas. Speakers: Sarah Weddington, lawyer in *Roe v. Wade* abortion rights case; Craig Washington, Texas State senator; Deborah Danberg, state representative. Music by the Beehives. Sponsor: Choice Coalition. For more information call (713) 522-6673.

Protests slow down attack against priest

BY HARRY RING

Public protest has slowed down moves by the Catholic hierarchy to dismiss William Callahan from the Society of Jesus because of his activity on behalf of Nicaragua.

Callahan has received copies of more than 900 letters of protest against the moves to curb him.

A Jesuit priest for nearly 41 years, Callahan is a central figure in the work of providing material aid for the people of Nicaragua.

He is codirector of the Quixote Center and national coordinator of Quest for Peace. They are headquartered outside Washington, D.C.

The Quixote Center was established by Catholics concerned with social justice. Quest for Peace, which developed out of the center, organizes aid for Nicaragua.

In a five-year period, Quest has raised more than \$100 million worth of aid for Nicaragua and, working with other groups, nearly as much again.

Callahan, and Quest, played a key role in marshaling emergency aid when a hurricane devastated the Bluefields area of Nicaragua's east coast last year.

Last spring, Callahan's superior in the Society of Jesus, ordered him to end his function as codirector of the Quixote Center. He was also commanded to disassociate himself from Priests for Equality and Catholics Speak Out.

Priests for Equality, which Callahan founded nearly a decade ago, now has 3,000 members in 35 countries. It advocates women's equality in civil society and the church, including the right of women to be priests.

Catholics Speak Out, Callahan says, was established to provide "a public voice to counter the forces of reaction that are quite strongly organized in Rome."

Two directives

Last March and April Callahan received two directives to leave the Quixote Center. He anticipated then that the third and final command would soon follow.

Then, in June Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, Vatican head of the Jesuits, met with Callahan in Washington.

In a Quixote Center newsletter, Callahan said that Kolvenbach would not budge on the order that he give up his activity. But Kolvenbach did say that when the third and

final command to do so was issued, a lengthy process of appeals to Rome was possible.

Earlier, in a telephone interview, Callahan pointed to some of the forces that he believes are behind the efforts to curb his work.

He noted that Cardinal Obando y Bravo of Nicaragua had made it known to U.S. Catholic officials that he doesn't like the work of Quest for Peace.

"And certainly," Callahan observed, "the Vatican itself has not been enthused about Nicaragua." He added that the pressure from the Vatican is not unrelated to its political ties with Washington.

The U.S. government, he said, began putting heat on the Quixote Center and Quest at the end of 1986. That's when a U.S. Customs agent arrived at their door with a subpoena. He demanded all of Quest's shipping documents and the names of everyone involved in the organization.

The agent suggested Customs wanted to determine if any arms had been included in the shipments to Nicaragua.

Callahan said they told the Customs agent he was legally entitled to examine their bills of lading, "but no names, no addresses."

Socialist activist Rick Higgins dies

BY KATY KARLIN

PHILADELPHIA — Rick Higgins, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, died here on August 11 after an eight-month battle with leukemia. He was 38 years old.

Higgins joined the Young Socialist Alliance in the early 1970s as a college student in Huntington, West Virginia, where he had been active in the movement against the Vietnam War. A year after joining the YSA he moved to Washington, D.C., to join the SWP.

Higgins went to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to help build the SWP there in the late 1970s. In 1981 he returned to Washington, where he became a member of the International Association of Machinists.

From 1983 to 1988 he worked in the printshop at the Pathfinder Building in New York City.

Higgins felt it was a priority for communist activists to become multilingual and taught himself to speak and read Spanish fluently. He encouraged other SWP members to do the

NEW YORK

Going Away Party for Prof. Fred Dube

Dube, a leader of the African National Congress of South Africa, is engaged in a battle with the State University of New York over its denying him tenure because of his political views. Next month he is moving to Olympia, Washington, where he will be teaching at Evergreen State College.

Fri., Sept. 1, 7-10 p.m.
Heavenly Rest Church,
90th St. at 5th Ave.
(entrance at 2 E 90th St.)

After several more visits, the matter was dropped when Quest moved to make a public issue of the harassment.

Next, an auditor from the Internal Revenue Service came to check their books to insure, she said, that there had been no abuse of Quest's tax-exempt status.

No charges

Callahan has appealed the Jesuit directives to Rome and has asked that he be informed of the charges on which the directives have been based. None have been forthcoming.

He has made it plain that he does not intend to give up his activity on behalf of Nicaragua.

He explained that in 1980 he had been silenced for his activity on behalf of women's equality and, for seven months, was out of activity.

"That time I obeyed," he said. "This time — given the fact that there haven't been any charges — I think I'm going to stay here."

Separation from the Jesuits, Callahan said, would be painful for him. But he considers it an obligation to support the people of Nicaragua "until U.S. policy has been turned around and they have a chance to be free."

same, and he translated at political meetings. He had begun a study of French when he became ill.

Higgins moved to Houston in the fall of 1988, where he helped carry out political activity in the city's large Spanish-speaking community.

In January 1989 he entered a Philadelphia hospital for chemotherapy treatment and spent the rest of his life there and with his parents in New Jersey.

Although he was not able to continue day-to-day political activity, Higgins stayed in touch with the party's campaigns throughout his illness. He was able to attend an SWP regional political conference in New York City in the spring. He continued to read the *Militant* until the last few weeks of his life.

A meeting to celebrate the life and contributions of Rick Higgins will be held in Houston on August 27, 6:00 p.m. at the Pathfinder Bookstore, 4806 Alameda. Those wishing to send messages are encouraged to send them care of the bookstore.

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

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NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 157a Symonds St. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 793-075.

Christchurch: 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 656-055.

Wellington: 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. Tel: (4) 844-205.

SWEDEN

Stockholm: P.O. Box 5024, S-12505 Älvsjö. Tel: (08) 722-9342.

Stiff problem — In the second business quarter, strikebound Eastern Airlines lost more than it took in. (Sales, \$89 million. Losses — minimally calculated — \$129 million.)



Harry Ring

Which sheds light on the Eastern offer to fly corpses for half the usual fare, plus frequent-flyer points for the mortician.

Contented customers — There are benefits for Eastern in that half-fare-for-corpses deal. They get a better class of passenger — folks who don't fret over late departures or notice filthy restrooms, aren't fazed by inexperienced scab pilots, or even care if the plane crashes.

Doesn't HUD pay for that? — The Housing Appropriations Committee voted \$578,000 for the care and maintenance of the vice-presidential mansion, more than double last year's figure. The main problem being the Quayles had to convert third floor space into bedrooms for their three children.

Pacifist type — A British criminologist says water cannons and tear gas are a better, less injurious way of dealing with unruly crowds than club-swinging cops. And while it has an unjustifiably bad name, he says, he also prefers the South African sjambok, a rhinoceros-leather whip.

Who's got problems? — New York officials forced the scrapping of a poster promoting *Jason Takes Manhattan*, the latest horror flick featuring the masked lunatic. The poster featured Jason slashing through the heart in the New York logo, "I ♥ New York." In a substitute poster, Jason looms over the skyline wielding a hunting knife.

The slogan: "New York has a new problem."

New Israeli victory — Israeli police broke into a children's camp and arrested four staff people "for promoting Palestinian nationalism and the *intifada*," according to the police. The children had given their tents such names as "Intifada" and "For Every Child Killed a New One is Born."

The clean air program — Last year, some 110 million U.S. people — nearly half the population — were breathing dangerously polluted air, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. That's 30 million more than the previous year.

No comparison — With British corporate execs enjoying wage increases as high as 70 percent, a spokesperson noted that executive salaries are not out of line with those of top entertainers and sports figures. And, he sniffed, such types "perform a socially and economically less important function than directors."

Pedagogy dep't — To improve fighting quality, the head of the U.S. Marine Corps wants its officers to start reading books — at least two a year for sergeants and, for starters, three for colonels. Enlisted personnel weren't included, perhaps on the theory that the less you know, the easier it is to follow orders.

S. African youth leader on tour, part of defiance



Militant/Janet Post
Rapu Molekane speaking at a rally in Oberlin, Ohio, August 10.

Continued from front page

last spring. His two-week tour to the United States is being organized by the Young Socialist Alliance.

By imposing a state of emergency in 1986, the South African regime greatly restricted the activity of opponents of apartheid. This

was followed by new restrictions on a range of organizations in 1987-88. The defiance campaign, say anti-apartheid leaders, is aimed at reversing these conditions.

UDF leader Zoli Malilindi told the press in South Africa following the successful defiance at the hospitals, "The time has come for us not to be willing participants in our oppression. The restrictions imposed on our organizations and members are intended to frustrate our struggle for liberation."

Molekane said, "I personally have also broken the restrictions, as have others, and we are operating legally. We have opened a Sayco office in Johannesburg. We have been addressing the press, writing on our own letterhead — all in defiance of the restrictions." Traveling outside of South Africa and speaking at meetings in the name of Sayco is another aspect of the defiance campaign, he pointed out.

Other signs of stepped-up protest inside South Africa include student demonstrations, in which a number of activists have been arrested. The students shut down the schools in protest and have been organizing rallies to press for the release of the activists.

Workers join in defiance

"Also on the factory floors," Molekane explained, "the workers are taking up the protest by eating in the cafeterias that are designated for whites only. We also intend to get into segregated buses, parks, and so on."

The protests during the past two weeks are only the beginning of the campaign, anti-apartheid leaders say. The UDF is planning a countrywide series of rallies in its own name on August 20 as a focal point of the actions during the month. The UDF is banned from

engaging in political activity. In addition, COSATU and other unions in the country are holding rallies to prepare for "five days of action" the first week of September. Preparatory rallies of up to 10,000 workers have been held in a number of cities.

The COSATU action will take place prior to the September 6 legislative elections called by the apartheid regime. Blacks are excluded from voting in the elections.

Molekane said the government "is facing a very deep crisis today, which is more visible than it was before. There are two general groupings within the ruling party, but there is no agreement among them as to how to handle the situation. Neither has ideas as to exactly what to do."

Economic pressures

There are also growing pressures in the South African economy, which are linked to the "general economic crisis in the world economy."

Los Angeles meeting set for Rapu Molekane

LOS ANGELES — Preparations are under way here for a visit by Rapu Molekane, general secretary of the South African Youth Congress (Sayco), August 20-21. The stopover in Los Angeles is part of a two-week tour.

On Monday, August 21, Molekane will speak on the campaign of defiance taking place in South Africa. His tour is considered

"Profits are going down, there are strikes, and even organized Afrikaner farmers are demanding government price supports for their crops," Molekane pointed out.

"The imperialists are also seeing that the economy of the country is declining. Their interests are at stake. The imperialists would like to get out of that situation strong, and be able to continue with the capitalist way of operating the country. So they are trying to push the racists to change. While they realize apartheid is doomed and it is going to be ousted they only want to make certain changes in apartheid."

But, Molekane continued, "the people demand the total destruction of apartheid and the creation of a new society, which would be with the participation of our leadership, in particular, the African National Congress."

Molekane's tour will take him to Washington, D.C., August 16-17; Birmingham, Alabama, August 18-19; Los Angeles August 20-21; and New York City August 23-25.

Thousands march in Pittsburgh

Continued from front page

the strike has crippled Pittston's coal production, but still hasn't forced the company to seriously negotiate with the union.

"This rally's a thorn in their side," he continued, "but it won't stop them. We sat back too long, for 10 years, not having to have a fight of any kind."

Later he remarked, "They're not just picking us out. They say Pittston's at war with coal

miners, but what about airline workers, telephone workers? It's worldwide."

Another miner who spoke at a prereally open microphone said he was a Vietnam veteran. "But we've got to fight against a domestic enemy: the courts, the cops, the companies."

National Organization for Women

The National Organization for Women handed out flyers for an upcoming rally to defend abortion rights, generating discussion pro and con in many small groups across the rally site. NOW activists met an overall friendly response, and one steelworker said male coworkers had pinned on prochoice buttons en route to the rally.

Many of the miners present have visited the Solidarity Camps in Virginia set up during the sympathy strikes. After miners ended their walkouts in mid-July, traveling to the camps became one of the ways for UMW members and other unionists to extend solidarity with striking Pittston miners.

Recently Mine Workers President Trumka called on unionists and others to come to the Virginia coalfield camps.

Striking members of the Communications Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Service Employees International Union, and the International Association of Machinists were among those recently in Virginia where miners have organized sit-ins, pickets and rallies.

Soul Vibrations on U.S. tour

Reggae band from Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast recently obtained visas for a concert tour in the United States.

Their New York engagements are: **Tues., Aug. 22, 9 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.** at Sounds of Brazil (SOBs), 204 Varick St. (corner West Houston). Admission \$12.50, \$15 at the door. For more information call SOBs (212) 243-4940 or the Bluefields Project (718) 797-0146.

Fri., Sept. 1, 7-10 p.m., at Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (corner Lighthouse, 3 blocks south of Canal), \$10 donation for the benefit of Soul Vibrations. For more information call (212) 966-5244.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE 25c

Aug. 24, 1979

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Basing itself on the power of the armed and mobilized masses, the revolutionary Sandinista leadership of Nicaragua has begun taking a series of radical measures — a deepgoing land reform, nationalization of all the country's banks, seizure of all the property held by the Somoza family and its collaborators, formation of popular militias and a revolutionary army, and the organization of committees in the factories and neighborhoods.

A high percentage of the arable land in the country was owned by Somoza and his immediate circle. This land has been nationalized. Under the direction of Sandinista leader Jaime Wheelock, the Nicaraguan Institute of Agrarian Reform has been set up. INRA is supervising the distribution of these vast holdings to the thousands of Nicaraguan peasants who have historically eked out a subsistence on tiny plots.

The land reform is being enthusiastically welcomed by the peasants and farm workers, who have mobilized in large demonstrations. Peasant militias are being organized to defend the new property relations in the countryside.

For now, the Sandinistas say, they are limiting the land reform to the *somocista* holdings. However, when reporters asked Wheelock what they will do if the lands run out and there are still needy peasants, he answered: "We'll take the rest of it."

Workers in the factories, stores, banks, and other workplaces are also forming committees. These are usually elected by assemblies of all the workers.

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

Aug. 24, 1964

The following are excerpts from an Aug. 6, 1964, statement by Fidel Castro, then prime minister of Cuba, and Osvaldo Dorticos, then president, regarding the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam that followed the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

The government of the United States devised and carried out its criminal plan in a deliberate, cold, and cynical way. Those who are familiar with the ways of Yankee imperialists when they set themselves for aggression, know about their constant provocations, their piratical methods, their shocking lies, and their shameful pretexts, reject with indignation the falsehood set up by the propaganda machinery of the U.S. government, which is blaming North Vietnam for this incident.

They did the same on April 15, 1961, when they attacked our air bases with airplanes bearing false insignias and claimed that internal rebellion had taken place. They have done the same in the naval base at Guantánamo, by shooting at our soldiers and declaring later that the aggression came from the Cuban side.

Now more than ever the unity of all the forces of the socialist camp, of all the peoples who have liberated themselves from imperialist yoke, and of all the forces that struggle for peace is necessary in order to stop the criminal warmongering of the United States.

How to advance strike at Eastern

As the six-month mark of the walkout at Eastern Airlines nears, striking workers are discussing how to meet the new challenges posed in their fight to defend their unions, livelihoods, and dignity.

- In early August 200 pilots crossed picket lines, doing damage to the unity and morale of the strike. The pilots' association president encouraged Eastern pilots to break ranks with Machinists union members and flight attendants and seek a return to work.

Hundreds of flight attendants also crossed the line during the same period, in some cases with the encouragement of pilots. The weight of a long strike has fallen heaviest on the flight attendants.

A majority of Eastern pilots, however, voted to stay out, and many pilot activists are pressuring Air Line Pilots Association officials to take stronger steps to support the strike, including a one-day "SOS" work stoppage by all ALPA pilots nationwide.

Although most pilots and flight attendants remain on strike, a blow has been dealt to the fight.

Returning workers will help Lorenzo move ahead with his strike-breaking "reorganization" plan. Even more important, the returns mark a breach in what has been the Eastern strike's greatest strength: the unity of the Machinists' and flight attendants' unions and pilots' association.

At the heart of this unity are the aircraft cleaners, ramp-service workers, facility cleaners, mechanics, and stock clerks organized in the International Association of Machinists, who voted overwhelmingly last February to go on strike and who have remained solid ever since. Less than 200 out of 8,300 have returned to work, despite stepped-up pressure from the company.

Some strikers have been disheartened by the defections among the pilots and flight attendants. But the response of many others has been anger and renewed determination to fight.

Organizing this determination to maintain and strengthen daily picket lines and other crucial strike activities is key now.

- The move by Eastern to use subcontracting companies organized by the IAM and other unions to service the carrier's restarted flights is a dagger aimed at the heart of the strike.

For this threat to even be posed is a result of the years of deals between union officials and airline and service companies.

Instead of fighting to defend the wages and conditions of all airline and airport workers, union officials have not organized a fight to seriously unionize — with equal pay, benefits, and working conditions — these subcontracting companies. At these outfits, workers — many of whom are Blacks, Latinos, and immigrants — earn little more than minimum wage and are subject to abysmal conditions.

They end up doing the same jobs in the same airports as workers at the major airlines for one-third of the pay — with the blessing of the union tops. Many of these workers, though, are opposed to being any part of getting Eastern back in the air.

This erosion of union strength and solidarity now poses

a danger to the Eastern strike as *IAM-organized* companies are being used to do struck work.

The sense of betrayal felt by many IAM strikers is justified. How could union officials allow this to happen? What does a union mean if members of your own union are forced to scab?

Many Eastern strikers are determined not to allow this to go unchallenged. They are seeking ways to extend the strength of their strike to their union brothers and sisters employed by these subcontracting companies. Bringing united union power to bear is the only way to fight to put a stop to this strike-breaking practice. Other IAM locals at the airports should join in this effort.

In this way the road can also be opened for a common fight to improve the wages and conditions of workers at the subcontractors.

The Eastern IAM local at New York's La Guardia Airport will be picketing Hudson General, an Eastern subcontractor, and appealing to workers there to support the strike. This is an example of the approach needed by strikers in other cities so that this threat can be beaten back.

- The buildup of flights by Eastern to 390 a day starting mid-August underscores the need for strikers to deepen efforts to mobilize wider backing in the labor movement to help reinforce picket lines and to organize rallies and other strike support activities. This should include reaching out to the Continental workers and explaining why they should oppose being used to break the strike by staffing flights for Eastern.

The actions organized in many cities by strikers and other unions to respond to the flight start-ups in July and August point in the right direction. More of the same is needed now — much more.

The "new" Eastern is weak, not strong, despite the number of passengers at the moment. If the power of the labor movement is brought to bear behind the Eastern strikers, centered at the airports, the planes can be emptied and the "reorganization" plan defeated.

More and more Eastern workers have gained confidence over the months as they've learned that the strike's strength lies with them and the solidarity they've earned from other working people, and nowhere else — not with the government, bankruptcy court, lawyers, or Wall Street financiers.

Mobilizing this strength remains the key to moving the fight at Eastern forward.

The walkout by 200,000 telephone workers has given the Eastern strikers a shot in the arm. In the last few weeks, big rallies, marches, and picket lines in a number of cities have brought together striking Eastern workers, coal miners, telephone workers, and hospital workers. The potential power of the labor movement is becoming more evident. Witness the 6,000-strong united labor march in Pittsburgh.

And the decision by other workers to strike — in part inspired by the Eastern workers' battle — is itself confirmation that the Eastern workers' continued determination to stand up and fight Frank Lorenzo's union-busting is correct.

Blow to Nicaraguan contras

The decision by the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua to move to disband the U.S.-backed contra bands located in Honduras is a victory for the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, and working people worldwide.

The August 8 decision by the five Central American presidents meeting in Tela, Honduras, marks another setback for Washington's campaign to pressure, isolate, and, if possible, overturn the Nicaraguan government, headed by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

The accord calls for creation of an "International Commission of Support and Verification," which will be formed by the United Nations and the Organization of American States. The commission, to be formed within 30 days of the signing of the accord "will be responsible for all activities that make possible the voluntary demobilization, repatriation, or relocation, including reception and installation of repatriated persons" to Nicaragua or elsewhere by December 5.

The commission is also charged with verifying the "dismantling of the camps left behind by the Resistance and Nicaraguan refugees."

"It's the beginning of the demobilization process," said Nicaraguan Vice-Foreign Minister Víctor Hugo Tinoco. "It means the end of the contras as a military force and the end of the Reagan administration policy that the Bush administration inherited."

Even though the U.S.-backed contra war against the Nicaraguan revolution was decisively defeated in 1987, Washington has spent \$4.9 million a month in 1989 on the contras to hold them together. Its aim was to maintain the contras as a warning to the FSLN government that Washington has no intention of normalizing relations.

The accord registers the fact that the contras are

through as a threat to the Nicaraguan government.

The 5,000 to 10,000 contras and their families now exist almost exclusively in camps inside Honduras. The encampment of a large defeated irregular armed force in that country has put pressure on the Honduran government to work out an agreement to demobilize the contra bands — even over Washington's objections.

The Bush administration had urged the leaders to delay a starting date for contra demobilization until after Nicaragua's elections on Feb. 25, 1990. As indications of a consensus by the Central American governments in favor of the accord grew, a pressure campaign was mounted by the Bush administration to stop it. Secretary of State James Baker and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Bernard Aronson telephoned Costa Rican President Oscar Arias to express Washington's displeasure.

Following the agreement, White House spokesperson Marlin Fitzwater said, "Our policy is and has been that we would not like to see demobilization before the elections." Noting that the contras won't be disarmed by force, a senior administration official said they "won't put down their guns until their legitimate grievances are addressed."

The contra war cost the lives of tens of thousands of Nicaraguans who fought to defend their sovereignty and independence and did billions of dollars in economic damage to the country.

The five-nation agreement to begin the disbanding of the contras represents a victory for the fight for self-determination for the Nicaraguan people. Pressing ahead to cut U.S. aid to the contras, to end the U.S. economic embargo of Nicaragua, and offer U.S. aid to the devastated country would be another step forward in defending Nicaragua's workers and peasants.

Is Puerto Rican independence practical?

BY DOUG JENNESS

U.S. Congress is discussing a proposal to hold a plebiscite in June 1991 on Puerto Rico's status in relation to the United States. The full Senate will likely vote on the proposed legislation at the end of this year, and the House of Representatives will take it up early next year.

The options being considered for the vote to be held on the island nation of 3.3 million people are statehood, independence, or a revised version of the current Commonwealth status set up in 1952.

The proposed vote on status has sparked a great deal of discussion among workers in the United States who come

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

from Puerto Rico. Several *Militant* readers have told me that in discussions on the job many recognize that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States and that independence is a good idea. But it's not very practical, they say.

They worry that breaking away from the United States and declaring independence could jeopardize federal benefits, including food stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, retirement payments, and Social Security. Those who argue in this vein point to neighboring countries like the Dominican Republic and Haiti, which are politically independent but have a lower standard of living than Puerto Rico.

A major problem with this argumentation is that the reason relatively more Puerto Ricans are unemployed and more proportionately receive welfare payments and food stamps than in any of the 50 states is colonial subjugation.

To accept these "benefits" as the best that can be achieved is to assume that struggle against colonial rule is pointless. We might even conclude that the anticolonial struggles in which millions have shed their blood in the past five decades — struggles resulting in political independence for scores of colonies from Algeria to the Philippines — were futile.

But the opposite is the case. In the course of their fight for independence, millions of workers, peasants, and other toilers have been transformed. They have become aware of themselves as makers of their own destinies and more self-confident of their potential strength. Moreover, in their continuing struggle for full national and social liberation, they have altered in their favor the relationship of forces between themselves and the imperialist oppressors.

Independence will not be won in Puerto Rico as the result of a colonialist-imposed plebiscite like the one Congress is cooking up but by a massive struggle that mobilizes a very large part of the island's population.

If Puerto Ricans wage a successful fight for independence, they will be in a much stronger position to press forward the fight for economic emancipation too. Puerto Rican working people will have more elbow room in which to carry on the struggle to establish their own government that can rid the island of domination by capitalist profiteers who are responsible for the high unemployment, low wages, devastating destruction to the environment, and other social evils.

When Puerto Rican working people can determine for themselves how the wealth they produce will be used — to build new schools, hospitals, and housing instead of lining the pockets of billionaire families in North America — they won't have to try to squeeze by on meager welfare payments from Washington.

Nor should it be assumed that an independent Puerto Rico will inevitably be isolated. It will be able to establish trade relations and secure loans from any country it chooses, including neighboring Cuba.

Moreover, it will inspire working people throughout the Caribbean and other regions, laying the basis for broad solidarity. The independence fight and its victory will encourage millions of U.S. workers fighting the employers and their government, too. Their struggle will be an important element in staying the hand of Washington in its efforts to isolate and crush a truly independent Puerto Rico.

The people on two islands in the Caribbean — Cuba and Grenada — have shown that breaking from dependence on U.S. ruling families and charting a course that benefits the big majority is possible.

Grenada, a country of 100,000 people, for example, won its independence from Britain in 1974. Strengthened by this, as well as the anticolonial movement sweeping the Caribbean, Grenada's working people five years later overturned capitalist rule and set up their own revolutionary government. They didn't say they were too small or poor to stop bending their knee to imperialism, but established their own trade relations and launched a program of economic development and social benefits that provided jobs and improved living conditions.

The revolutionary government was overturned in 1983 by internal treachery, not economic or political isolation. Revolutionary Grenada, like Cuba, shows the way for Puerto Rico's working people.

New pamphlet will aid Mark Curtis defense effort

The Stakes in the Worldwide Political Campaign to Defend Mark Curtis. By John Gaige. Published by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311. 25 pp., \$1.

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Who is Mark Curtis? Why was he framed and jailed by Iowa authorities? How does a frame-up work? What kind of campaign is being waged on Curtis' behalf? Why should workers, activists, and defenders of democratic rights join together in defending him?

A new pamphlet published by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee provides convincing and compelling answers to

IN REVIEW

these questions. It will be an asset in the campaign to gain wider support for Mark Curtis, who is serving a 25-year jail term at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

The pamphlet is an edited version of a talk in support of Curtis given by John Gaige, a founding member of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Gaige is also the national farm work director of the Socialist Workers Party, which Curtis is a member of.

Curtis was arrested by Des Moines, Iowa, police on March 4, 1988. In jail police hit Curtis with a nightstick, shattered his cheekbone, and put a gash in his face that required 15 stitches. As they jumped him, they yelled, "You're a Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds."

Curtis' arrest came in the midst of protests against a raid by the Immigration and Naturalization Service at his workplace, the Swift meat-packing plant. Seventeen of Curtis' coworkers were picked up in the raid.

In the pamphlet Gaige explains these facts and then provides the social and political background to the raid and Curtis' arrest — the employers' assault over the last decade against workers' living standards; the huge influx of immigrant workers to the United States, who the employers use as a source of cheap labor and seek to pit against native-born workers; the rising resistance of workers, particularly in the

meat-packing industry, to the bosses' demands for concessions; and the fights across the Midwest of farmers against bank foreclosures.

Curtis functioned as a unionist and political activist in this context. He stood up to the company and won when Swift attempted to fire him for walking off the line for a back injury. He participated in protest actions against racism. He studied Spanish to better communicate with coworkers whose first language was not English. And he was deeply involved in defending his 17 coworkers arrested by the INS.

"In his daily political activity," Gaige explains, "Curtis tried to unite workers" because that is the only way to advance the struggle for justice, rights, and better working conditions.

This made Curtis a dangerous man for the employers, but, Gaige says, "he was not unique. The things he did are the kinds of activities that thousands of workers in the United States and the rest of the world do, workers who are combative and have a vision of how to change the world."

What happened to Curtis is also not unique Gaige points out. "Cops routinely beat workers, thousands of us, in countries around the world. As in many other cases of political frame-ups, criminal charges are being used to carry out the frame-up."

Unable to directly challenge a frame-up victim's activities because of formal legal rights, authorities will often concoct criminal charges to curtail these activities. "A successful frame-up using criminal charges," Gaige explains, "lessens the political space that working people have to function in."

When did the frame-up begin in Curtis' case? The moment the police began to manufacture evidence to attempt to make criminal charges against him stick.

On March 4, 1988, Curtis, driving to the grocery store, responded to a young Black woman's plea for help. She said someone was after her and needed a ride home. Curtis drove her home and on her request waited on the front porch of her house so that she could make sure it was safe inside.

Within minutes Officer Joseph Gonzalez grabbed Curtis, took him inside the house, handcuffed him, pulled down his pants, and read him his rights.

"When Gonzalez pulled Mark's pants down," Gaige explains, "the frame-up began." The political character of the

frame-up was revealed later when Curtis was called a "Mexican-lover and colored-lover" by the cops who beat him.

Despite the judge's exclusion of key evidence at Curtis' trial on rape and burglary charges last September, the evidence presented fit Curtis' story, not the cops. The prosecution was not able to provide even a shred of evidence substantiating the charges.

"We defend Curtis because the facts show that he is not guilty of the charges," Gaige says, "not simply because he is a worker, a unionist, a political activist, a radical, a socialist, and a member of the SWP." The facts show that Curtis was victimized for his political activities.

In the pamphlet, Gaige reviews how the trial was stacked against Curtis and how a number of his rights were violated. "Mark is supposed to have the right to the presumption of innocence, a very important conquest of humanity," Gaige says.

"The capitalist 'justice' system, however, turns everything on its head. When it's your word against the cops, you're presumed guilty," he explains.

The pamphlet ends by quoting from Curtis' statement to the court upon his conviction. "Up until now, the goal of a conviction is succeeding, and like many others, I'll do jail time," Curtis said. "But the goal of demoralizing and discrediting me and my supporters has not and will not succeed. I'm going to keep on being part of the fight of working people. As far as that goes I'll never be separated from people in struggle for their rights. This battle is not over. My case is unusual in only one respect. That is, the number of people involved in fighting this victimization, which is only beginning to grow. I will be freed."

"They haven't been able to break Mark Curtis," Gaige concludes. "He's having political discussions in prison just like he did at Swift and in Des Moines. He carries himself with dignity. And he's effective there."

Since Curtis' conviction and imprisonment, support has been won from thousands of workers, activists, and supporters of democratic rights in the United States and internationally — from the South Pacific to Scandinavia, and from Central America to Canada. This new pamphlet produced by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee will help Curtis supporters advance this fight for justice.

LETTERS

Sea turtles

The Kemp's Ridley sea turtle may be protected by U.S. law, but it is not protected by the U.S. government. On July 24 Secretary of Commerce Robert Mosbacher illegally granted Gulf of Mexico shrimp trawlers a 45-day suspension of federal regulations requiring the use of turtle excluder devices on their nets.

Shrimpers blockaded the Houston ship channel the preceding weekend, but Mosbacher denied that this affected his decision. For the third straight year shrimpers have been granted a stay.

Sea turtles are oxygen breathers. They become trapped in the trawlers' nets and drown. The nets typically scoop up about nine pounds of finned fish, seaweed, and turtles for every pound of shrimp.

The turtle excluder device, TED, is a trap door located near the mouth of the net. The turtle can push the door upward on its way to the surface for air. The device weighs 37 pounds and is collapsible on deck.

Environmentalists, including the Audubon Society and the Center for Marine Conservation, sued in Houston's Federal District Court on July 28, but the hearing was postponed when the government claimed it had not had time to prepare.

"There were 47,000 breeding females on a beach in Mexico in 1947," said Sandra Hoover, executive director of the Houston Audubon Society. "This year there are 600."

Shrimpers have threatened more blockades if the court grants the injunction the environmentalists seek.

Ruth Turpin
Hammond, Indiana

Mark Curtis

I am from Des Moines, Iowa, and have come in contact with the Pathfinder Bookstore. I am very intrigued by your newspaper for it has insight into worldly topics of great interest. What the *Militant* stands for is real and of great value.

While I was at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa I had the pleasure of meeting Mark Curtis. I believe Curtis is a very intelligent person who has become a victim of circumstances, who has been used as a scapegoat.

A prisoner
Mt. Pleasant, Iowa

Death penalty I

The drug running by Cuban General Ochoa and the others is a reprehensible act of the highest order, amounting even to treason. The question still is whether execution is proper punishment.

In the past the *Militant* has consistently opposed the death penalty in the United States. Why is this situation different?

It is certainly possible to argue against the death penalty in capitalist society while justifying it under socialism. Under capitalism the death penalty is undemocratic and repressive because it is usually, if not always, invoked against those who, however heinous their acts, are themselves victims of the system.

Under true socialism, on the other hand, one might view the death penalty as the genuine expression of the people's will in response to crimes that undermine a system benefiting all the people.

There is, though, a strong argument against the death penalty in almost all contexts.

Even under socialism there is a risk of abuse and of executing an



innocent person. Why is it not better for the cause of socialism, and more consistent with socialist principles, to imprison Ochoa and the others for life, or even after a period of reeducation to allow them to redeem themselves by spending the rest of their lives confessing their crimes and working for the people?

If even the most heroic and ardent revolutionary can fall so far and yet redeem himself, why would this not be a positive example of socialism at work? Is this not what rectification is really all about?

Thomas Kleven
Houston, Texas

Death penalty II

Like other readers, I am disappointed with the *Militant's* endorsement of the death penalty in the Ochoa drug-trafficking case.

The chief determinant of ethics for a revolutionary movement is this: Does an action hinder or hurt the revolution? I believe that for the Cuban revolution, which has completely consolidated its authority, the death penalty only serves to degrade the moral climate of the nation.

The function of a corrections system should be correction, not punishment. Punishment is based on the retrograde notion of revenge. It diminishes respect for human life and intimidates workers. But the Cuban prison system has been exemplary in many respects, providing rehabilitation and reintegration into society for convicted offenders.

It's argued that Ochoa so tarnished the revolution that only his execution could eradicate the stain he created. This underestimates the intelligence of people all over the world. People can and do accept life imprisonment as an appropriate sentence for heinous crimes. Besides, those who support the Cuban revolution would doubtless accept the authority of a complete house-cleaning investigation and trial of those involved as a sufficient correcting action.

Second, it's said that Ochoa authorized the death penalty for Cuban soldiers who committed rape in Angola... so he should receive no less a sentence. But does one excess truly warrant another?

This brings us to the question: Is the death penalty necessary in a workers' state? Nicaragua shows by its example that it is not: they have proudly abolished capital punishment.

The *Militant* printed Doug Jenness' anti-death penalty column adjacent to an editorial endorsing the Ochoa death sentence. As Jenness said, "...communists pledge to make elimination of capital punishment part of the program of the workers' and farmers' government." Lenin is cited in support of this position.

We should expect no less of Cuba, the most politically advanced workers' state.
Albert Fried-Cassorla
Melrose Park, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Correction

In the August 11 issue of the *Militant*, the article "South African union congress meets," on the Congress of South African Trade Unions convention in South Africa, misidentified the head of the African National Congress Foreign Affairs Department in Lusaka, Zambia, as Govan Mbeki. That name should read Thabo Mbeki.

New York protest: 'Independence for Puerto Rico! Free prisoners!'

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS
AND MIGUEL MELÉNDEZ

NEW YORK — More than 2,000 people marched here August 12 in a spirited demonstration for Puerto Rican independence. The lead banner, carried by the coalition organizing the march, read, "Independencia, sí; colonialismo, no!" (Independence, yes; colonialism, no!).

Now is an important time, explained Carlos Gallisá, general secretary of the Puerto Rican Socialist party, as thousands have united in protests in Puerto Rico and the United States in support of independence. Some 80,000 proindependence supporters marched in Puerto Rico in June. Addressing the crowd, Gallisá said imperialism has failed for 91 years to crush the Puerto Rican independence struggle. He called for a boycott of the proposed plebiscite on the status of Puerto Rico now being debated in the U.S. Senate.

A torrential rainstorm hit the march as it headed from the Lower East Side to the United Nations. Despite the streets being flooded and subway trains shut down, marchers proceeded enthusiastically, with proindependence chants and songs, accompanied by drums.

'Protest colonialism'

"This action is to protest colonialism," said Andrés Sierra, a member of the Andrés Figueroa Cordero Foundation. "On August 16 and 17 the case of Puerto Rico will be discussed before the United Nations Commission on Decolonization."

"We also want to protest against the plebiscite." The U.S. Senate's proposal that the Puerto Rican people vote on their form of government "is an invention made in Washington," Sierra said. "The U.S. rulers want to take the case of Puerto Rico out of the United Nations. You should note that the U.S. Senate conducted hearings on the plebiscite just before the UN's hearings on the colonial status of Puerto Rico." This is a transparent attempt to influence the debate in the UN, continued Sierra, as his contingent prepared to join the march.

Buses brought participants to the march from Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Boston, and Hartford, Connecticut. Most of the

"U.S. gov't proposal for plebiscite in Puerto Rico is violation of self-determination."

marchers were members of a variety of Puerto Rican community organizations such as the Women's Issues Group from Hartford and the Albizu Campos Cultural Center from Chicago.

North American and Puerto Rican political organizations also participated, including the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, Movement for National Liberation, Workers World Party, War Resisters League, Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and Women's Workshop in the Americas.

There were representatives from the main organizations in support of the Cuban revolution in the United States: the Venceremos Brigade, Antonio Maceo Brigade, and Casa de las Américas. Also present were several organizations from the Dominican community and Central America solidarity activists.

A vocal contingent represented students from Hostos College in the Bronx. A student leader explained what he thought of the plebiscite: "An oppressed people cannot renounce its own independence. So the plebiscite is a farce. The United States has to understand that the Puerto Rican people will



Militant/Margrethe Siem

2,000 marched August 12 in New York for Puerto Rican independence

fight for its independence until it's won, whatever the cost."

Political prisoners

Jorge Farinacci, one of the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15 independence fighters

framed up by the U.S. government, also spoke. One of the central demands of the march was for freedom for all Puerto Rican political prisoners.

The warmest welcome was given to those who have been victimized by the U.S. gov-

ernment for their support of Puerto Rican independence, such as Farinacci and Rafael Cancel Miranda. Cancel Miranda and four other independence fighters spent 25 years in U.S. prisons for their proindependence actions.

James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City, spoke about the importance of bringing the truth about the anticolonial struggle in Puerto Rico to all working people fighting for their rights. This perspective will lead to greater unity against U.S. colonialism and imperialism, the common enemy of people around the world, he said.

Harris added that the SWP is campaigning to publicize the truth about the gains being registered by the Cuban revolution today. The party is also promoting an Action Program that explains why working people must unite in struggle to defend themselves against the effects of the coming worldwide economic crisis by fighting to cancel the Third World debt, to shorten the workweek and to defend affirmative action.

Rapu Molekane also addressed the crowd. Molekane is general secretary of the South African Youth Congress and on the executive committee of the United Democratic Front of South Africa. As part of the current defiance campaign against apartheid regulations, Molekane is touring the United States to broaden support for the fight against apartheid. He expressed support for the Puerto Rican independence struggle and discussed the need to organize more pressure to help break U.S. government ties with South Africa.

UN discusses Puerto Rico's status

BY SELVA NEBBIA

UNITED NATIONS, August 16 — The UN Special Committee on Decolonization opened its annual session here today to discuss the case of Puerto Rico.

The committee, whose purpose is to take up implementing the UN declaration on granting independence to colonial countries and peoples, was scheduled to meet for two days.

However, due to the great number of representatives of organizations that have signed up to address the hearings, it will probably extend through August 18.

More than 60 organizations have signed up to present their views on the political status of Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony since 1898. The two main positions presented by the speakers have been that of those who advocate an independent and sovereign Puerto Rico and those who favor the annexation of Puerto Rico to the United States as its 51st state.

The first two speakers, Nora Rodríguez Matías and José Milton Sotero, representing the Puerto Rican Bar Association and the Puerto Rican Committee to the UN respectively, urged the UN to adopt a resolution similar to ones approved by that body in recent years reaffirming Puerto Rico's right to self-determination.

The resolution adopted in 1988 states that the UN "reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence" and "expresses its hope, and that of the international community, that the people of Puerto Rico may exercise without hindrance its right to self-determination, with the express recognition of the people's sovereignty and full political equality."

Speaking as president of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, Edwin Vargas, Jr. stated, "Those of us who live here in the continental United States were the first victims of colonialism, forced to migrate by the economic dislocation wrought by investment

decisions we did not control."

Vargas described the effects of colonialism on 2.5 million Puerto Ricans living in the United States. "As part of the urban poor," he explained, "we have been subjected, along with African-Americans and other oppressed national, racial, and ethnic minorities, to racial violence, inadequate health services, segregated and substandard housing, underfunded and segregated education and low-wage jobs with few if any benefits."

Many of the speakers referred to the proposed plebiscite on Puerto Rico's status that is being discussed in the U.S. Congress.

Awilda Palau spoke on behalf of the Puerto Rican Committee of Intellectuals. She called for an end to the jurisdiction of U.S. federal courts in Puerto Rico, an end to the application of the Taft-Hartley law in Puerto Rico, and "an end to the repression and for freedom to all those who are imprisoned for demanding their right to self-determination."

Palau was accompanied by Jacinto Rivera, representing the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, and by Moisés Méndez López, president of the Federation of Proindependence University Students.

Symbol of colonialism

"As we speak today, the trial by the U.S. government in Puerto Rico of independence and freedom fighter Filiberto Ojeda Ríos is reaching its conclusion," said Nancy Alisberg, representing the National Lawyers Guild.

"Ojeda Ríos is being tried in an English-speaking U.S. court in San Juan — the clearest symbol of colonialism — for defending his home, his wife, and his country from dozens of heavily armed FBI agents, including helicopters and bazookas, who attempted to assassinate him in the early hours of Aug. 30, 1985," explained Alisberg.

Alisberg detailed the situation facing Puerto Rican political prisoners in U.S. jails. "If the U.S. government is operating in good

faith concerning the right of the Puerto Rican people to exercise self-determination," Alisberg pointed out, it should "grant amnesty to all incarcerated Puerto Rican political prisoners and prisoners of war."

Former U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark also addressed the UN hearing. "It is difficult to identify a more extreme case of colonialism during the last 500 years than the case of Puerto Rico," he explained.

"First a colony of Spain for nearly four centuries, since 1898 we have seen the colonial exploitation of that island by the United States," Clark added.

Representatives from two masonic lodges, including a women's lodge named after Puerto Rican patriot and poet Julia de Burgos, spoke in favor of Puerto Rico's right to self-determination.

Statehood

Among those who spoke in favor of Puerto Rico's annexation to the United States were representatives of the Cahuas Committee for Statehood, Youth in Favor of Statehood, Statehooders in Action, and the New Popular Party. They called on the UN committee not to interfere in the case of Puerto Rico, since this was an "internal matter of the United States."

Only about a third of those who signed up to speak at the hearings were able to get the floor today. Among those scheduled to speak on August 17 and 18 are: Carlos Gallisá, general secretary of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party; Rafael Cancel Miranda, a former political prisoner who spent 25 years in a U.S. prison; Juan Mari Bras from Independence Common Cause; Juan Manuel Delgado from the Anti-Plebiscite Committee; James Harris, Socialist Workers Party; Luis Amauri Suárez Zayas, general secretary of the General Workers Council of Puerto Rico; and José Luis León, from the United Committee Against Repression (CUCRE).